

Enabling Sustainable Community Development

*Ismail Serageldin, Michael A. Cohen,
and Josef Leitmann, Editors*



**An Associated Event
of the Second Annual Conference
on Environmentally Sustainable Development**

*held at The World Bank
Washington, D.C.
September 22-23, 1994*

Environmentally Sustainable Development Proceedings Series No. 8

ESD

Environmentally Sustainable Development Series

Proceedings

Culture and Development in Africa: Proceedings of an International Conference
ESD Proceedings Series no. 1 (Also in French)

*Valuing the Environment: Proceedings of the First Annual International Conference
on Environmentally Sustainable Development*
ESD Proceedings Series no. 2

Overcoming Global Hunger: Proceedings of a Conference on Actions to Reduce Hunger Worldwide
ESD Proceedings Series no. 3

Traditional Knowledge and Sustainable Development: Proceedings of a Conference
ESD Proceedings Series no. 4

The Human Face of the Urban Environment: A Report to the Development Community
ESD Proceedings Series no. 5

*The Human Face of the Urban Environment: Proceedings of the Second Annual World Bank Conference
on Environmentally Sustainable Development*
ESD Proceedings Series no. 6 (Forthcoming)

*The Business of Sustainable Cities: Public-Private Partnerships
for Creative Technical and Institutional Solutions*
ESD Proceedings Series no. 7 (Forthcoming)

Enabling Sustainable Community Development
ESD Proceedings Series no. 8

Studies and Monographs (formerly Occasional Papers)

The Contribution of People's Participation: Evidence from 121 Rural Water Supply Projects
ESD Occasional Paper Series no. 1

Making Development Sustainable: From Concept to Reality
ESD Occasional Paper Series no. 2

Sociology, Anthropology, and Development: An Analysis of World Bank Publications 1975-1993
ESD Studies and Monographs Series no. 3

The World Bank's Strategy for Reducing Poverty
ESD Studies and Monographs Series no. 4 (Also in French)

Monitoring Environmental Progress
ESD Studies and Monographs Series no. 5 (Forthcoming)

Community Health Cell
Library and Documentation Unit
367, "Srinivasa Nilaya"
Jakkasandra 1st Main,
1st Block, Koramangala,
BANGALORE-560 034.
Phone : 5531518

Enabling Sustainable Community Development

Ismail Serageldin, Michael A. Cohen, and Josef Leitmann, Editors

Bonnie Bradford, Editorial Consultant

An Associated Event
of the Second Annual Conference
on Environmentally Sustainable Development
held at The World Bank
Washington, D.C.
September 22-23, 1994



Environmentally Sustainable Development Proceedings Series No. 8
The World Bank, Washington, D.C.



© 1995 The International Bank
for Reconstruction and Development / THE WORLD BANK
1818 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.

All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America

First printing August 1995

This report has been prepared by the staff of the World Bank. The judgments expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Executive Directors or the governments they represent.

Cover photograph by Ronilo Villanueva. At the launching of the Paco Environmental Enhancement Project, a fish vendor who is a member of a community-based organization helps a citizen place his waste in the proper color-coded container. Paco public market, District V, City of Manila, June 1994.

Ismail Serageldin is vice president for Environmentally Sustainable Development at the World Bank. Michael A. Cohen is the senior adviser in the same vice presidency. Josef Leitmann is senior urban planner in the Transportation, Water, and Urban Development Department at the Bank.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Enabling sustainable community development / Ismail Serageldin,
Michael A. Cohen, and Josef Leitmann, editors ; Bonnie Bradford,
editorial consultant.

p. cm. — (Environmentally sustainable development
proceedings series ; no. 8)

"An associated event of the second annual Conference on
Environmentally Sustainable Development held at the World Bank,
Washington, D.C., September 24-25, 1995."

ISBN 0-8213-3317-8

1. Community development—Congresses. 2. Sustainable development—
Congresses. I. Serageldin, Ismail, 1944– . II. Cohen, Michael
A., 1944– . III. Leitmann, Josef. IV. International Conference
on Environmentally Sustainable Development (2nd : 1995 : World Bank)
V. Series.

HN49.C6E54 1995

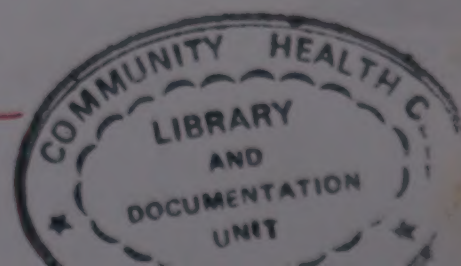
307—dc20

95-17629

CIP

DEV 110

295
05395



Contents

Foreword	v
Preface	vii
Acknowledgments	viii
Introduction	1
Overview <i>Josef Leitmann</i>	1
Opening Address <i>Jeb Brugmann</i>	2
Session 1 Communities Speak	7
Partnerships for Waste Minimization in Metro Manila <i>Elisea Gozun</i>	7
Negotiating Change: The Orangi Pilot Project in Karachi <i>Arif Hasan</i>	9
Gender and Community Change: Bombay and Kanpur, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres <i>Sheela Patel</i>	10
Building Political Coalitions: <i>Nos Quedamos</i> (We Stay), Bronx, New York <i>Yolanda Garcia</i>	11
Discussant Remarks <i>Deepa Narayan</i>	13
Floor and Panel Discussions	14
Session 2 Cross-Cutting Lessons	18
Promising Solutions at the Intersection of Poverty and the Environment <i>Janice Perlman</i>	18
Community-Based Environmental Management in Asian Cities <i>Mike Douglass</i>	19
Community-Based Development Experiences across Cities <i>Mona Serageldin</i>	21
Discussant Remarks <i>David Barkin</i>	22
Special Address <i>Ismail Serageldin</i>	24
Session 3 Learning from International Support	29
Strengthening Community and Municipal Alliances <i>Jeb Brugmann</i>	29
Lessons Learned in the Environmental Health Project <i>May Yacoob</i>	30
The Mega-Cities Project: Transferring Workable Approaches <i>Akhtar Badshah</i>	32
Discussant Remarks <i>Ximena de la Barra</i>	33
<i>Kamla Chowdhry</i>	35
Conclusion	37
Reflections on the Forum <i>Michael A. Cohen</i>	37
Issues and Lessons <i>Josef Leitmann</i>	38
Notes	41

Appendixes 42

A. Program: Enabling Sustainable Community Development	42
B. Presenters	45
C. Classification of Registered Participants	48

Boxes

1 A successful waste management partnership in Manila	8
2 Sustainable community development and the World Bank: two views	17
3 Cross-cutting lessons from Mega-Cities	18
4 Lessons learned in community-based development	22

Foreword

Participation is the cornerstone of sustainable community development. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro made clear that sustainability is more about people and community-based prosperity than about technical matters.

People within communities are the essential agents of change in the post-modern world. Communities are the most promising social unit for achieving a sustainable and equitable future.

A sustainable community cannot be defined by legal boundaries but, rather, by relationships among its people and by their roots in a specific space. The community carries a people's invisible ecological heritage, which relates to nature, including land, water, and renewable resources.

Environmental problems become critical at the local level. Production is sustainable if it maintains or enhances a region's carrying capacity and sustains people's livelihoods. Land use, natural resource planning, and environmental management are essential tools for reorienting the carrying capacity of a community. Efficient allocation of environmental resources also calls for appropriate pricing and accounting systems.

During this forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development, participants agreed that broad participation is essential, that it must be inclusive, and that people must be well-informed so that their communities can make good choices and reach consensus on them.

Many participants also highlighted the need for decentralization. This will involve revisiting the issues of carrying capacity and valuing the environment as a social good.

Regarding innovative financing, others pointed out that it is important to review and share successful experiences and to develop public policies that integrate environmental and economic concerns in participatory decisionmaking. New approaches to taxation, public and private investment, and mediation of different interests also are necessary.

Sustainable community development involves a change of mindset in which unsustainable economic growth and profitseeking are replaced as primary goals by people's progress and prosperity. Sustainable development represents a challenge to existing decisionmaking processes, sharing of power, and societal values.

Alicia Bárcena

Preface

Urgent environmental problems are faced by millions of people, including the half of the world's population that is projected to live in cities by 2005. To focus global and national attention on this problem, the World Bank convened its Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development, The Human Face of the Urban Environment, in Washington, D.C., in September 1994. This was the first global conference to bring together leaders representing four perspectives—international institutions, national and local governments, the private sector, and community groups—to examine the challenges posed by urban environmental problems; identify models of good practice in environmental management; and mobilize global, national, and local energies and resources to address these problems.

While cities may be the loci of a range of environmental problems, their communities, which face the challenges of degradation on a daily basis, are also the sources of many of the most successful solutions. "Enabling Sustainable Community Development," an Associated Event of the Second ESD Conference, was designed to explore this phenomenon through dialogue with community innovators, students of neighborhood dynamics, and external supporters of local initiatives. Community leaders focused on relations with the private sector, negotiating change and building political coalitions, gender, and the interface between community initiatives and local government. Recent global and regional studies on how communities have contributed to the development of environmentally friendly cities were presented. Finally, lessons were shared from nongovernmental and official aid programs that support environmental management at the community level.

More than 200 community, environment, and development specialists participated in the forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development. This publication documents the wisdom of the participants, often in their own words. Key themes that emerged from their dialogues include differing world views of community development and environmental sustainability, local effects of globalization and free trade, the importance of a range of urban indicators, community empowerment as part of good governance, and the varied roles of donors. Among the lessons learned were, first, that despite the importance of community organizations, municipal governments are the key partners for community action. Second, external support will require more trust and consultation. Finally, more attention needs to be paid to gender issues. The World Bank fully embraces these important messages as it expands its financing of urban development programs, which already reach nearly 12,000 cities and towns of the developing world.

Ismail Serageldin
Michael A. Cohen
Josef Leitmann

Acknowledgments

The editors wish to express their appreciation to Bonnie Bradford, editorial consultant; Sriyani Cumine; Alicia Hetzner; Fiona Mackintosh; Virginia Hitchcock; and Barbara Eckberg for their work in bringing this document to publication. Julie Harris desktopped the book, and Tomoko Hirata designed the cover.

Thanks go also to Vinodhini David, Aissatou Seck, Grace Sarin, and the participants, who helped make the Enabling Sustainable Community Development Associated Event a reality.

Introduction

Overview

Josef Leitmann, World Bank

Often the most successful initiatives for solving local environmental problems spring from the communities that face the challenges of degradation on a daily basis. This report is based on a 1½ day community forum entitled Enabling Sustainable Community Development, held on September 22-23, 1994 in Washington, D.C., as an Associated Event of the World Bank's Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development, "The Human Face of the Urban Environment." This forum sought to examine the *social and political dimensions* of community approaches that support sustainable urban development from three perspectives: (1) the grassroots (the change agents themselves); (2) the analysts (an assessment of cross-city experiences); and (3) the external supporters (international networks). The program is included as Appendix A. Two hundred and sixty individuals from various regions registered to attend the event (see Appendix C).

The objective of the first session was for community leaders to speak about empowerment. Managers, participants, and initiators of successful environment-related community initiatives presented different perspectives on community empowerment. They then joined a panel to discuss the interface between municipal governments and communities. In the second session the objective was to cull cross-cutting lessons about how communities can contribute to the "ecological city." Recent comparative evaluations of sustainable community development

were assessed, and this was followed by a discussion. The objective of the third session was to learn from the experience of international programs that support community initiatives. Representatives of global and regional programs that offer financial, technical, and informational/network support to communities presented some lessons learned from supporting community initiatives. The forum concluded with more informal exchanges of experiences.

Highlights of the Enabling Sustainable Community Development forum included:

- A personal, moving opening address by Jeb Brugmann that posed key questions and set an informal tone for the discussions that followed
- Substantive and persuasive presentations by the grassroots speakers on community empowerment in Session 1
- Strong question-and-answer periods during all three sessions
- The rich sets of lessons that emerged from the academics presenting the results of the comparative studies in Session 2
- Ismail Serageldin's inspiring remarks in the second session
- A critical assessment of the forum by the UNICEF representative for failing to examine the causes of poverty as well as alternative development models
- Michael Cohen's response to the critique and summation that put the event in perspective.

The key messages of the participants, often in their own words, are portrayed

in the following pages for use by the development community.

Opening Address

*Jeb Brugmann, International Council
for Local Environmental Initiatives*

In opening this forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development, I want to bring out some of the major issues we will be exploring and encourage us to keep our discussions down to earth. I would like to begin by relating a story from my own background.

Following World War II, millions of middle-class families in the United States bought new homes in new suburban developments as part of one of the largest development booms in U.S. history. Along with new housing this development boom created entire new lifestyles dependent upon the private automobile, the single family home with its array of equipment such as individual washing machines and dryers, and unprecedented levels of personal consumption.

Coming out of the Great Depression, my grandparents, who came from a working class background, were not in a position to buy such a home. As an alternative they bought a cabin in the woods, one of a number that had been used as summer vacation homes by more affluent families from New York City. These cabins did not have running water, electricity, sewerage services, or insulation. Other working-class families bought neighboring cabins, and together these families proceeded to build a community—the community in which I was raised.

My grandfather was a self-taught mechanic, welder, and carpenter. He and his neighbors joined together to build the infrastructure of our community. They built the water system, expanded and upgraded the road system, and turned

the summer cabins into year-round homes. All this was done without outside assistance, without advice from professional engineers, without approvals or permits from municipal planners, and with no external funding.

I was raised in this community of 300 or 400 households that was built and maintained by its own residents. I believe that, if asked, these people would have said that they lived in a sustainable community. There was a strong sense of pride and ownership, shared responsibility, and community-mindedness. We had initiative, skills, and practical experience in making a community work.

While some of the bridges and infrastructure constructed by these families are still in use today, the community I have just described is no longer recognizable. I can say without exaggeration or romanticism, as a person who works for municipalities and their professional cadres, that our local process of community development, underway at that time for about 15 years, came to an end when the municipality got involved.

Over the hill from our community the municipality had approved the construction of a large suburban development of about 200 homes. As a result of this development, acres of old hardwood forests were destroyed, and the local process of ecological development, which had been underway for about 100 years, was irretrievably altered. A few years later the same municipal professionals approached the residents of our community—not through our own community committee but individually—and presented their plans. They claimed that the septic systems used for our waste water were polluting the community lake in violation of the law. The only solution, they said, was to construct a large new water and sewerage system for our community. I remem-

ber my grandfather going to meetings to fight this plan and discussions in our own household about how a large sewerage system was not needed, how they would need to widen the roads to put it in, how this would drive up property taxes and home values, and how ultimately it would make it impossible for the people who built our community to continue to live there.

The municipality implemented this plan in spite of overwhelming opposition, and it had a more sinister impact than we ever expected. The infrastructure project did drive up property taxes and property values, and the original residents did move out. With widened roads and a large-capacity water and sewerage system in place, the developer from over the hill purchased the forests surrounding our homes. They cleared the forests and they filled these places with expensive middle-class homes.

Our septic discharges into the lake probably were creating an environmental problem, but this was nothing compared with the ecological problems caused by the ensuing development—the cutting of the old forests, the resulting siltation of the lake, and the runoff of nutrients and chemicals from acres of new, manicured lawns. Two and three car families replaced the single car families who founded the community. The level of per capita resource consumption increased exponentially because of the lifestyles of the new families.

In the name of development this same story has played itself out in community after community, North and South, since the reestablishment of international trade and financial markets after the Great Depression. While these small, local stories may seem to be local struggles and incremental changes, they are driven by larger economic processes and impera-

tives, often defined outside the country being affected. These economic imperatives to create new needs and tastes, to open new markets, to obtain cheaper inputs, to maintain the externalization of social and environmental costs are still the dominant force in what we today call “development.” We see it blatantly in the terms of recent free trade agreements, which undermine social and environmental legislation. We see it in structural adjustment policies, and even decentralization programs, which reduce the power and role of the public sector as the primary voice for social and environmental concerns. We see it in the trend to push privatization as a panacea and we increasingly see it in the tendency of donor countries to tie the provision of international financial assistance to contracts provided to companies within their own economies as a way to boost their own domestic economic interests.

These economic strategies, often dressed up in the words “development” and even “sustainable development,” are often in direct contradiction with the imperatives of local community development and the imperatives of local ecological development. I see sustainable development as an effort to mediate and find some kind of a balance among the imperatives of three distinct development processes—economic, community, and ecological.

I just told a story of how a municipality made a big mistake—how it succumbed to the untempered forces of economic development and undermined community development and ecological development processes. We in the municipal world are quite aware of those mistakes and continue to make them. In seeming contradiction I will also argue that a democratic local government, one that works in partnership with communi-

... economic strategies, often dressed up in the words “development” and even “sustainable development,” are often in direct contradiction with the imperatives of local community development and the imperatives of local ecological development

—Jeb Brugmann

*Today the top-down
imperatives of
economic expansion
and the bottom-up
imperatives of
communities and
ecosystems meet
in City Hall*

—Jeb Brugmann

ty-based forces, is the institution that is today most likely to play this balancing and mediating role among these three development processes.

Today the top-down imperatives of economic expansion and the bottom-up imperatives of communities and ecosystems meet in City Hall or in Town Hall. On the one hand the municipalities are receiving new powers and responsibilities in the context of decentralization and are on the front lines of attracting international investment. On the other hand it is to the municipalities that NGOs concerned about the environment and community-based organizations concerned with protecting community interests first bring their demands.

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) is interested in redesigning and reforming the role of municipalities so that they can effectively play a mediating role. ICLEI has recently launched a worldwide research program called the Local Agenda 21 Model Communities Programme. For the next three years ICLEI will be working with 20 municipalities around the world to design and test participatory and sustainable development planning processes that draw upon the expertise, knowledge, talent, energy, and enthusiasm of the communities in those municipalities.¹

From the first months of this project it has been clear that we will only succeed in the municipal sector if the imperatives of community development and ecological development are articulated in a planning process that includes the participation of NGOs, community-based organizations, and the residents of these communities.

In concluding this opening address, I would like to leave you with some of the key questions we will be asking as we

review development and infrastructure projects in this program:

Does the project aim to create active citizens or passive clients and consumers? Economic development depends upon creating customers and demand. Community development relies on the process of empowerment. Ecological development relies on the active development of human resources (education, culture, and technology) and on liberating the existing talents of people in communities.

Does the project address locally defined needs or does it attempt to impose or create new needs? A sound development project should encourage innovation and draw upon and support the talents and resources of local residents. However, the first imperative of top-down services or development programs is often to convince a community that it is lacking something. As in other industries the development industry must maintain and expand its markets—a supply-driven process that often fails to address the actual demands of the community and often contradicts the community development imperative for self-reliance. Furthermore, each new development need creates new pressures for consumption, which contradicts the ecological imperative to reduce consumption.

Will the project strengthen institutions of local self-governance? Partnerships between community-based organizations and municipalities will only succeed if the municipality is actually a democratic agent of local self-governance. In many instances development finance institutions and donors have actually weakened local self-governance so that municipalities simply become agents of top-down decisions that are negotiated between external financiers and central governments. During the brokering of finance,

central governments are often convinced or required to accept institutional reforms, professional standards, and management procedures that weaken or permanently undermine local self-government itself, as was the case, for instance, in my own community.

Will the project replace an indigenous system that could be upgraded to meet real needs? Most of us have seen examples of internationally-financed projects in which institutions, along with corporate partners, have designed, constructed, and economically benefitted from the building of facilities, such as sewerage treatment plants, that are no longer operating or providing a local benefit because the community or municipality cannot afford to maintain and operate the facility. These facilities often replace earlier, indigenous systems that could have been upgraded and maintained at an affordable cost to community residents.

Will the project do more to harm the environment from a life-cycle perspective than it is trying to fix? As development institutions export their technologies, they also export the lifestyles and the patterns of resource consumption of the wasteful North. A new power station, a

water and sewerage system, or a sites and services project may alleviate a local environmental problem but may greatly increase requirements for energy, water, cars, and fuel and for an array of consumer products that ultimately are detrimental to the environment.

Who stands to benefit economically? We are still wrestling with the problem of how to upgrade infrastructure and living conditions without pricing existing residents out of their own community. Some of the questions we need to ask are: Will the project encourage speculation and gentrification? Will the contracts be given to outside firms using outside expertise? How will local residents be employed, trained, and provided with lasting economic opportunities throughout the project?

Hopefully, by sharing our own stories we can better understand how to strengthen partnerships between community groups and municipalities for sustainable development. I hope that, drawing from our own experiences, we can have frank and constructive discussions that will help the World Bank to improve its performance as a mediator and a key force for sustainable development internationally. ■

Session 1 Communities Speak

In Session 1 community leaders, including managers and initiators of successful environment-related community initiatives, presented their perspectives on community mobilization and empowerment. Alicia Bárcena, chair of the session, began by describing several important aspects of community participation and empowerment:

- Communities are the most effective unit to put in practice the principles and programs of sustainable development.
- One of the greatest challenges at the community level is to be able to participate in decisionmaking. Access to information is essential to enable communities to set their own priorities and make decisions.
- While nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are often active in communities, community participation should not be considered synonymous with NGO participation. There are many other actors and agents—such as churches, schools, and mass media—that can mobilize, mediate, and serve as change agents in communities.
- While governments may decide to call on communities for their input, more formal structures need to be developed to encourage ongoing dialogue, negotiation, and participation of communities with governments. This includes setting up financial mechanisms and institutional frameworks.
- Strategies for dealing with conflict need to be developed at the local level. Ombudspersons who can help to solve people's problems

and help to resolve conflicts will become increasingly more important in communities and cities.

- Globalization and interdependence are increasing. This process is disempowering communities and people's organizations at the local level. In addition, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing, and the poor are becoming more marginalized in the process. Local realities and global priorities need to be better linked.

In her introduction to the session, Alicia Bárcena noted the session brought together a diverse group of practitioners and committed leaders and offered a unique opportunity to exchange experiences and share common visions on how to better achieve the goals of more sustainable and equitable development.

Partnerships for Waste Minimization in Metro Manila

Elisea Gozun, Metropolitan Environmental Improvement Programme

Environmental awareness in the Philippines is a relatively recent phenomenon. Elisea Gozun explained that:

International attention on Smokey Mountain, a huge 45-meter-high mountain of garbage in Metro Manila, helped prompt the introduction of concepts in solid waste management that at that time were new to the average Filipino, concepts such as waste segregation, composting, recycling, and reuse. With the active participation of NGOs and support from some donors, new and more environmentally friendly waste management tech-

International attention on Smokey Mountain, a huge 45-meter-high mountain of garbage in Metro Manila, helped prompt the introduction of concepts . . . such as waste segregation, composting, recycling, and reuse

— Elisea Gozun

nologies are being implemented at an accelerated pace.

Increasing numbers of communities, NGOs, foundations, and businesses in Manila are starting new ventures in waste management projects involving partnerships. Box 1 provides one of many examples of partnership arrangements that seek to find and implement lasting solutions to environmental problems.

While the origins of projects vary greatly, as well as the initial level of involvement and motivation of businesses, there is a strong tendency for each of these partners to develop a deeper commitment to the environment as they learn to cooperate in project implementation.

From the community perspective, involving business enterprises is not only a potential source of funds for project requirements but is also an avenue for acquiring better technologies in solid

waste management and management of other environmental projects.

An important aspect of these partnerships is that communities, NGOs, industries, and the private sector are actively assuming their rightful role as stakeholders, not just beneficiaries, of the state. They are becoming directly involved in improving the environment and are doing this together with the government.

Local governments, motivated by the high municipal costs imposed by environmental degradation, have been receptive to these partnerships. It has been found that a multi-sectoral approach is usually needed to tackle complex environmental problems.

In addition to the collaboration that there has been between communities and industries to implement community-based activities, there has also been collaboration in monitoring industry's compliance with environmental standards. For large projects, such as geothermal plants and mining, monitoring committees have been created composed of representatives from the community, the industry, the local government, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Funds for the monitoring operations are provided by the industry, which has found such arrangements acceptable since the results are agreeable to both the community and the government.

Many opportunities are being found in Manila to build sustainable local efforts towards the final goal of environmental improvement. Much more remains to be done given the massive scale of environmental problems. However, the experiences in Manila demonstrate that solutions are most often rooted in practical approaches and involve the coordinated efforts of community members, NGOs, the private sector, and government.

Box 1. A successful waste management partnership in Manila

The Ayala Group of Companies, one of the larger business conglomerates in the Philippines, is implementing the Barangay Integrated Development Program through its Ayala Foundation. This foundation provides funding and technical assistance to communities for environmental improvements. In 1994 the Foundation provided training programs on Zero Waste Management to leaders of eighteen *barangays* (neighborhoods), followed by training on the financial viability of recycling, with Recycling Technologies Inc. (RTI), focusing on the recycling of denim wastes into paper.

The Ayala Foundation, RTI, Levi Strauss/Philippines, and two *barangays* have established a successful recycling project. Levi Strauss turns over scrap denim materials from its clothes manufacturing plant to RTI, which then processes these scraps into good-quality recycled paper. The Ayala Foundation has trained residents of participating communities in how to produce paper bags and other paper products using the recycled paper produced by RTI. These products are bought back by Levi Strauss and used as packaging materials in retail outlets that sell Levi apparel.

An established commitment to community support and environmental protection has led to the partnership of business enterprises and communities in implementing this successful and profitable waste management project. Given the initial success of the project, the Ayala Foundation may expand it to include other *barangays* whose leaders have received training in Zero Waste Management.

Negotiating Change: The Orangi Pilot Project in Karachi

Arif Hasan, Architect
and Urban Planning Consultant

Orangi is the largest informal settlement in Pakistan—the one million people living in Orangi represent about one-tenth of Karachi's population. In 1980 an NGO called the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) began working with residents of Orangi. Many problems in Orangi, and other informal settlements, result from the loss of people's ability to work together, combined with an inequitable political system and unequal political relationships. One of the basic principles guiding the work of OPP is the belief that unequal relationships and poor conditions will change if people are organized.

Residents considered sanitation one of their most important problems. They believed that the government provided sanitation systems free of charge to high-income areas. Thus, they also believed that the government should provide their sanitation system. The OPP began negotiations about sanitation between residents of Orangi and the government. The government claimed that sanitation systems are paid for by the users and that people in low-income settlements could not afford to pay the costs of a sanitation system.

Sanitation costs determined by the government were several times higher than the actual costs of labor and materials. OPP research showed this was due to factors such as excessive profiteering by contractors, kickbacks to government officials, and inappropriately high engineering standards. The research indicated that, if the costs could be limited to just labor and materials, then a sanitation system would be affordable to low-income people.

The process for developing a low-cost sanitation system in Orangi resulted in a

sewerage system that was financed, managed, and constructed by the people of Orangi for themselves. OPP helped to organize residents and provided technical assistance. Local people collected the money needed to pay for the work, and the installation and maintenance of the system was organized by local groups.

Over 75,000 of the 90,000 households in Orangi have developed a sanitation system for themselves and have collectively invested about US\$2.5 million in this process. Estimates show that the local government would have spent US\$12 to US\$15 million to complete this work.

About 4,500 organizations were created to carry out this work in Orangi, and these organizations have completely changed the political relationships between the people of Orangi and the local government:

Essentially, two entities relate to each other according to the amount of power that they have. . . . As communities become more powerful, more aware, and acquire more knowledge, the relationship changes in their favor. This cannot be done just by good intentions or by passing laws. It is essentially the building-up of local power and permitting local institutions to grow.

The nature of investments by the local government in Orangi is also different now that people understand the process and problems inherent in development projects. Local residents have been able to pressure the local government into producing the plans that they want.

After the project achieved a measure of success, the OPP became involved in the development of other informal settlements. People from other communities came to find out what had happened in Orangi and to learn how they might duplicate the program. The project has

. . . two entities relate to each other according to the amount of power that they have. . . . As communities become more powerful, more aware, and acquire more knowledge, the relationship changes in their favor

—Arif Hasan

become involved in a number of additional programs beyond sanitation.

The government and international agencies also became interested in the project. While there has been pressure to duplicate the program at the national level, the project organizers doubt that the project could be replicated on a national scale immediately, since, for example, local community control and organizational and technical assistance by OPP as an intermediary NGO have been central features of the project. OPP is helping other NGOs to develop their capabilities.

The government typically views low-income settlements with hostility and suspicion. It also relies on procedures and standards derived largely from first-world examples that are not appropriate for low-income settlements in developing countries.

A fundamental challenge in working with informal settlements is that conventional approaches do not take into consideration that conditions are not static—they change so quickly that information gathered by surveys can change from one day to the next. Certain processes are already in place in informal settlements, and these processes need to be taken into consideration and supported and, if necessary, regulated in some way. To create positive change, residents need help in organizing the necessary technical and managerial support, but the residents must be in control of what happens.

Gender and Community Change: Bombay and Kanpur, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres

*Sheela Patel, Society for Promotion
of Area Resource Centres*

About 30 to 50 percent of the population in Indian cities live in informal settlements. About 10 percent of the people in these

settlements are defending themselves on a daily basis against evictions and the demolition of their homes. The Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), which started by working with pavement dwellers in the city of Bombay in 1984, together with the National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF), and Mahila Milan ("Women Together"), are helping to create institutional structures to assist people in defending their homes. They are also helping to organize, educate, and inform communities about how to increase their capabilities to negotiate with city authorities. Community participation in this context is not considered a static variable—it is an ongoing, messy, confused process, which is dynamic and changes constantly.

The poor in India do not have evidence that it would be useful to them if they were to participate in the political process. Many people elected in municipal corporations often come from poor settlements but become corrupted by the political system. They make promises to their constituents before elections as a means of staying in power but rarely carry through on these promises.

This alliance of organizations (SPARC, NSDF, and Mahila Milan) is attempting to build the capacity of the poor to tell the city what they want. It is difficult for the poor to decide what they want because they do not believe that they have choices in their lives. The challenge to organizations is to change this attitude. At the heart of the reorganization of communities is an acknowledgement that women currently manage resources and sustain communities. However, as settlements become more prosperous, men start taking over.

When representatives of an external entity come into the community, whether it is the municipality or an NGO, they begin looking for the community's leaders.

The community usually puts forward people who can talk well with outsiders and who are used to interacting with the outside system, and these are typically men who have an alliance with a local politician or others outside the community.

It is necessary to create conditions so that the empowerment of women is the means to ensure the empowerment of communities. Systems need to be designed to build up women's capacities and to create conditions for a renegotiation of relationships between men and women within the community. One of the most important foundations of the reorganization process is creating conditions of consensus, creating ways in which conflicts can be resolved, expanding choices, and reducing competitive behavior. These become important tools for developing a sustainable organization process within communities.

Another important tool is encouraging poor people to exchange experiences and to interact with others like themselves. Most communities have developed many innovations and techniques that could become useful solutions in other communities. This can become the foundation for creating a larger human resource network to build solidarity among different communities and can provide the basis for improving community practices. SPARC's participation in a project funded by UNDP through Asia Pacific 2000 is an exciting process in which people from poor communities travel to other cities to see how other poor people are solving problems. This is an opportunity that helps the poor in their negotiations with their own city officials, to have the assistance of people who successfully negotiate in their cities come and hold their hands during their own negotiations.

City officials and politicians must increasingly deal with communities

because global realities are creating opportunities for alliances with international organizations that seek to bring in community organizations and NGOs to sit across the table to discuss issues such as air pollution, sanitation, waste disposal, the environment, and a host of other issues. However, so far such a process often does not take the priorities of the communities into account:

One of the things our networks increasingly do is to ensure that the focus of a particular community or group of communities in terms of what they want to do is acknowledged first. It has been our experience that if those needs are fulfilled first, then everything else will follow. Poor people's common sense is very powerful. Their economic sense works. So they don't need a big educational campaign. They don't need propaganda. . . . Basically what they require is time to think through this process.

One of the challenges is how those concerned with global issues learn to understand and acknowledge the local realities in which the poor live. How can the needs and priorities of the poor become the basis of initiating the process of change? How can people and institutional arrangements be strengthened? Ultimately, people are the building blocks on which sustainability becomes a possibility. There need to be local institutional arrangements to refine and carry on this process of strengthening local communities and local agendas for change.

Building Political Coalitions: *Nos Quedamos (We Stay)*, Bronx, New York
Yolanda García, Nos Quedamos (We Stay) Committee

Nos Quedamos (We Stay) is the mission of a community-based organization located in the South Bronx of New York City.

Poor people's common sense is very powerful. Their economic sense works. So they don't need a big educational campaign. They don't need propaganda

— Sheela Patel

*If we can learn how
to live together
with tolerance and
respect, the world will
be a far better place
to live in without so
much violence. It's done
through design,
through form,
respecting what's there,
respecting the
community. . . .
We know what works
— Yolanda Garcia*

The South Bronx is one of five boroughs in New York City and is home to more than half a million people. In 1992 an announcement was made in a forum held in one South Bronx community that this community was going to be displaced by an urban renewal plan. Beginning at that forum, the community came together to save their homes.

Sixty-five percent of the community is vacant land, vacated when the area was abandoned by businesses and people who left in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The community has experienced about 30 years of disinvestment and disenfranchisement by the local, municipal, and federal governments.

When told of the urban renewal plan that would displace everyone in the community, many people said that they would not allow this to happen and argued that they were the caretakers of the area who had remained when the government had gone away. These people owned their homes and their businesses and acted as their own fire department, sanitation service, and police because these services were not provided for them.

The community banded together and formed a committee called *Nos Quedamos*. They approached the Bronx Center project, a project that had been initiated by the Bronx borough president, and together they went to the Bronx borough president (the local government representative) and were able to postpone the urban renewal plan.

Nos Quedamos kept finding ways to involve the 6,000 people living in the community. They registered voters to make sure everyone had a voice with a demand behind it. They started to seek assistance from government agencies but found that many people in agencies simply work behind their desks and do not understand

what is happening in the community or how things are actually done.

In infrastructure planning, for example, agencies need to communicate with the people who understand how traffic circulates and how new development will fit into what already exists in the area. In this way it is possible not just to create a small neighborhood but to create connections with a larger community. New ghettos are formed when communities are not asked their opinions or informed of decisions being made about their community. The government needs to learn how to connect better with communities, as shown in the following example:

They wanted to make a four-acre park [even though] the parks department has no money to take care of it. . . . we told them this civic center should be [located] where three communities meet. Right now they collide. If you put a civic center there, you can put in a water fountain, hold summer concerts, the kids have a place to go, and maybe this community can come together. . . . And these barriers will come down eventually. These barriers are what is killing this nation and what is killing all of us. If we can learn how to live together with tolerance and respect, the world will be a far better place to live in without so much violence. It's done through design, through form, respecting what's there, respecting the community. We know what should come into this community. We know what works . . . and we know exactly what made it pull apart.

Most of the members of *Nos Quedamos* have lived in the community for at least 30 years. When they first got started, they worked to involve the Bronx Center, the local congressman, the Bronx borough president, and the local politicians. It is not only a question of involving the community; it is also important to bring in the government. When govern-

ment agencies have not helped, *Nos Quedamos* has found professionals who were willing to provide technical services without charging a fee. Strong collaboration is needed between residents and government professionals in order to create and build lasting investments. Investments will be sustainable if respect is given to long-time community residents. Otherwise, changes will not last, and chances are that a new ghetto will have been created.

Government alone should not be responsible for determining the fate of its people by triggering events such as displacement that will forever change those affected. This community is culturally rich and diverse and has shown that community members can be brought in as equal partners to work along with elected officials and city agencies. Today *Nos Quedamos* continues its collaboration with the city as plans are implemented and has ongoing weekly meetings.

Many community members speak broken English and, because of this, they shy away from speaking their thoughts, ideas, and dreams. As a community it is necessary to unite and stop the indoctrination of low self-worth. All people have ideas worth hearing and worth saying. Rather than separating communities, differences in age, race, gender, religious affiliation, language, and cultural background should motivate people to work towards true, long-lasting changes.

Discussant Remarks

Deepa Narayan, World Bank

In India there is an expression, "You can't clap with one hand." In other words you need both an informal and a formal system, inputs from both local communities and government. The real issues are at the interface between the two.

A number of questions have emerged from the presentations of the speakers this morning. Among them are: Why have these programs and movements succeeded while others have not? Are there any common elements in these experiences? What are the lessons to be learned from these experiences, and how can these be used and applied by entities such as municipal or central governments and the World Bank?

The following are among the most striking common elements and lessons to be learned from these experiences:

At the Micro Level

- Each program started at the micro level in one community with one group of people. There was a real problem felt by the community, not a problem perceived by an outsider. There was a commonality of interest that brought people together and kept them together despite their differences, especially differences in class. The benefits felt by local people outweighed the costs of working together.
- Each program invested in social organization and capacity building. They went slowly. Programs helped people to organize themselves. The communities made their own rules and regulations, and these changed and evolved over time.

At the Macro Level

- Each program was able to change or influence, either immediately or over a period of time, the formal government structure. They grew and were so successful that they could no longer be ignored.

In India there is an expression, "You can't clap with one hand." In other words you need both an informal and a formal system, inputs from both local communities and government. The real issues are at the interface between the two

— Deepa Narayan

- Each program incorporated active negotiation and active challenging of political powers, and were not just a passive participatory process.

Potential Lessons to Be Learned

- The micro level is often ignored by large bureaucracies or institutions. However, the very simple realities at the community level must be traced upwards and transferred into institutional designs. If not, disaster results.
- There is a lot of mistrust and suspicion about community control. Empowerment is about local control, local authority, and local ownership—which is very threatening to many agencies. One of the greatest fears is that, if communities take control, anarchy will prevail, costs will go up, and projects will collapse. However, as the speakers have discussed, and has been shown in many cases, the costs actually go down, and technology systems are more likely to be used and maintained.
- One of the biggest fears and problems in implementing a community empowerment approach is the issue of letting go of control. People in large agencies need to realize that there are very few options left and that we would not be talking about community empowerment if other things that have been tried had worked.
- Each organization described by the speakers had a deep philosophy and had very participatory working arrangements. The question arises: Is it actually possible for bureaucracies such as municipalities, multilateral or bilateral donors, or

government departments that are themselves very hierarchical to embrace community empowerment approaches? Or do they first have to embrace participatory management before they can support community empowerment?

Floor and Panel Discussions

A lively floor discussion, including a question-and-answer period, followed the four presentations in Session 1. Then an interactive panel session, chaired by Nafsiah Mboi, Member of Parliament, Indonesia, focused on the interface between community initiatives and municipal governments. This panel included the four speakers in Session 1, who were joined by Nancy Skinner, Director, Local Solutions to Global Pollution, Berkeley, California, U.S.A.; and Eric Duell, Associate Director of International Programs/Washington, D.C. Office, Habitat for Humanity International, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

The following points highlight some of the key issues raised in the floor discussion and panel session:

Communities

- The community development approach starts from the point of view of people and their needs. The environmental viewpoint tends to be divorced from people, as if people somehow have to be fitted into an environmental approach. It is better to incorporate environmental needs into the community development model, not the other way around.
- Women are usually the leaders in communities when it comes to issues related to water, food, the family, and the environment. How-

ever, when it comes to opening up the coffers, women are bypassed for funding. This happens in both the North and the South. Every analysis should include a gender, racial, and class analysis as part of the planning process.

- While catalysts and community activists are needed, systems need to be developed in the community to involve the other residents. If the leaders eventually drop out or move, then the system will enable others to step forward. Putting this kind of system in place helps to empower the community.
- One of the biggest deprivations of poverty is never to be allowed to make mistakes. Everyone wants success stories. For community development to be sustainable, communities must be able to develop their own alliances and have the space to negotiate, to make mistakes, and to learn from these mistakes. You learn more from mistakes than from successes.
- The poorer the community, the more important it is that people learn how to work together and to form partnerships with others outside the community.
- Much more attention needs to be given to education. The challenge is to help people to believe that they have power. In self-help people must believe they have the ability to contribute to their destiny.

Municipal Government

- Local governments have the potential mechanisms to bring about the kind of development and empowerment that communities want. Often, the only way to achieve

them is to make sure that people from the community work in the government. Activists can affect change not only by advocacy and through their organizations but also by being elected to public office.

- Historically, many groups of people and social classes have been disenfranchised. They feel that the institutions of power have worked against their interests. If people become associated with those institutions of power, then they risk being viewed in the same way as those who have obstructed development.
- Local governments in post-colonial countries are very different than those in countries in which government officials are elected. It is not possible just to blend them.
- Many countries have not made reforms after independence. This means, for example, that mayors are not elected and that money cannot be kept by local communities. Structures for community empowerment may not be in place.
- Where local officials are not elected, communities may not see any point in working with local governments. When officials are politically appointed, it is usually very difficult to get the local government and the bureaucracy to act on this issue of community participation.
- Decentralization is occurring in many countries, and local governments are receiving more power as part of this process. However, local governments will not receive more power until they demand it, and local governments will not demand more power until local communities demand more power.

- For community development activities to be sustainable, people have to have access to their own tax monies. Unless there is structural decentralization and local authority over budgets, resources will not be available through local authorities.

Interface among Communities, NGOs, and Municipal Governments

- Outside agencies, including NGOs and governments, should start with the problems that communities themselves identify. People from within the community are needed to sustain projects on a daily basis, and people must believe the plans are their own plans, not imposed from outside.
- Community input is needed at the initial stages of a project rather than after the agenda of the external agencies and/or the government has been determined.
- One of the most important things activists can do is to help to prevent national and international agencies from making policies or decisions that create new obstacles for local communities by making it even more difficult for them to address their own problems.
- An organized and responsive citizenry is needed at the local level, but responsible local governments are also needed. Local governments need to support and help communities to become organized, and this organized community needs to demand that it be involved and recognized by the local government.
- There are always two kinds of cities in the same space—the city inhabited by the poor and the formal city. Violence is sometimes an

eye-opener and a window. It creates tremendous tragedy but it is also a very important opportunity that helps everyone to realize that they are occupying the same space and that your own aspirations cannot be fulfilled if there are others who have no stake in the process. This destroys both worlds.

- There is often hostility and mistrust between NGOs and governments, since NGOs usually represent the interests of the community. Mechanisms need to be developed to resolve conflicts and diminish hostilities within communities, NGOs, and governments, in addition to finding ways to learn about each other's culture and language.

International Agencies and Donors

- National and international agencies cannot address the unique circumstances and resources of each community. People in communities are in a much better position to address the local problems that arise over time.
- Conceptualizing community participation and the nature of grassroots movements is, to a certain extent, an intellectual activity for outsiders. The people who experience and need to resolve their problems are people who are living with these problems daily. The job of the outsider is to provide them with access to the resources that are available.
- Multilateral funding agencies need to recognize the value of the community participation approach in project design. When they make a point to go to communities, together with the local government, to

consult with the people about what they need and to define the demand, this is the sustainable way to put together effective projects.

- The resources of donor agencies appear to be enormous. However, while donors may invest millions of dollars in one city or in ten cities, there are tens of thousands of urban settlements worldwide. So whatever one does has to be infinitely replicable within the existing resources of the country.
- Often officials from external donor agencies who are visiting countries try to talk with government officials in the capital city and perhaps at the provincial government level and to community development agencies. Yet people in community development agencies may have little understanding of what is happening in communities. It is important for donor agencies to find ways to learn much more about what is really happening in communities especially when plans are being developed that will directly affect these communities.
- Ways need to be found to support the development of large organizations that believe in community participation and community empowerment so that they are able to promote these aims. Other than in forums like this how can the time and space be created for a continued dialogue? Governments and communities need to be brought together in some way to work out day-to-day problems. ■

Box 2. Sustainable community development and the World Bank: two views

Nancy Skinner

Democracy and decentralization go hand-in-hand. The difficulty in addressing questions from the floor about the World Bank is not wanting to offend the graciousness of one's host. However, I think the structure of the Bank is antithetical to this concept of democracy and decentralization. It is not just an issue of changing lending guidelines or redefining development guidelines; I believe it would require a complete restructuring of the Bank.

As it is structured now, the Bank cannot function in a way that really promotes sustainable community or economic development. Until the Bank becomes decentralized and is perhaps an institution of many smaller lending institutions with boards of directors from the communities in which it is going to lend, it cannot really be responsive. If it could be restructured in such a way as to be democratic and decentralized, perhaps it could play a greater role in achieving sustainable development.

Deepa Narayan

I will try not to spend this time defending the Bank because right now in its present form and shape I have questions, too. However, let me tell you about some of the progress we have made. I would like to report a little bit about the work that has been going on through the Participatory Development Learning Group, a process that was started four years ago. It began with the involvement of about ten people, and now hundreds of people are involved with it. Changes have occurred as a result of the process, but there is still a long way to go. One of the recommendations of this group is that the dialogue between the Bank and governments should include other stakeholders such as NGOs, businesses, and the poor.

There have been strong messages from the senior management of the Bank that participation is "best practice" and the only way to do business. This means that economic and sector work and the policy dialogue should be done in a participatory way rather than by Bank staff going out as experts and writing policy papers that are not accepted by governments and, therefore, are not used.

One of the incentives for change is that people who carry out innovations and move towards a more participatory approach will be rewarded. More serious attention is being given to having a greater presence in resident missions in the field rather than having most Bank personnel at the headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Nancy Skinner

As the person who played the role of the harshest critic, I would like to say I could have also made such a criticism of many other institutions, including many NGOs of which many of us here are a part. We all have areas in which we can improve, and our natural tendency is to want to centralize our power. The real measure of an institution is its ability to rise to the occasion and to see where its structure or its function is not equal to its purposes. While I am sorry that I was perhaps the harshest critic, I am very pleased that it prompted this discussion and I am pleased to hear that the World Bank is undergoing such a process.

Session 2 Cross-Cutting Lessons

In Session 2, the emphasis shifted from the experiences of community leaders and activists to the perspectives of researchers and agencies seeking a better understanding of community-based development activities in a range of cities. The three speakers in Session 2 described their research efforts and shared some of the major lessons they are learning in their work.

Caroline Moser, chair of the session, helped to frame the session. She pointed out that each of the presentations would be based on the results of comparative studies. She added that, while it is generally understood that problems can arise in attempting to make comparisons and draw conclusions about the experiences of unique programs, being able to draw lessons and generalize about trends is important for replicating and scaling-up small-scale projects so that they can have a greater impact.

Promising Solutions at the Intersection of Poverty and the Environment

Janice Perlman, *The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.*

The Mega-Cities Project is a global, non-profit network that aims to shorten the time needed for workable community-based solutions to reach the scale needed to make a significant difference. The Mega-Cities network is composed of local teams in eighteen of the world's largest cities. Each city has a Mega-Cities coordinator, a research team, and a steering committee comprising a partnership among key leaders from government, businesses, NGOs, grassroots groups, academia, and the media. These Mega-Cities teams have been working together for the last eight years to identify successful innovations and to carry out research and actions that will help to translate the lessons learned into programs, policies, and practices that can transform the way cities are run and lead towards sustainability. The cross-cutting lessons learned from these experiences worldwide are outlined in Box 3.

The Mega-Cities Project has just completed a set of detailed case studies of the nine most promising innovations related to environmental justice in Mega-Cities.² The case studies cover: *urban agriculture and reforestation* (Bidara Cina Greening Program in Jakarta, Indonesia; Market Gardens in Accra, Ghana; and Reforestation of Favelas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), *solid waste and garbage collection* (Zabbaleen Community Development in Cairo), *sewerage* (CORO Public Toilets in Bombay, India; SIRDO Solid Waste Technology in Mexico), *toxic waste* (Environ-

Box 3. Cross-cutting lessons from Mega-Cities

1. There can be no global environmental solutions without *urban* environmental solutions.
2. There can be no urban environmental solutions without addressing poverty and conditions in low-income settlements.
3. There can be no improvement in low-income settlements without involving community residents and organizations and building on local coping mechanisms.
4. There can be no reliable research on local coping mechanisms unless done locally by joint efforts between local research teams and grassroots groups.
5. There can be no way to involve grassroots groups without NGO intermediaries.
6. There can be no impact of scale without replication. "Small is beautiful" but it is still small.
7. There can be no replication that works if imposed from above; choices and peer-to-peer learning are needed.
8. There can be no sustainability without partnership; scaling-up into public policy is needed to alter the way the system functions.
9. There can be no deliberate social change in cities within the old roles and rules of the game.
10. There can be no sustainable solutions without local/global linkages.

ment Benefits Program in New York), *health* (ASHA Health Cooperative in Delhi, India), and *food production and consumption* (PAIS Food Program in Buenos Aires).

The impacts of these innovations go beyond environmental improvements and poverty alleviation to raise system-challenging, new rules of the game, new roles, and changed incentives. As a result of these experiences people in low-income communities not only improved their standard of living but also increased their self-esteem, their sense of competence, and their dignity. The role of women in these innovations has been found to be a critical factor, as has women's empowerment. Stigmatized groups often gain respect and dignity within the larger society as a result of these innovations, and organizations and local governments often go through a process of transformation as well.

The experiences brought out in these nine case studies offer a number of lessons for public policy. Each case has had an impact on the political culture, on the building of democracy, and the ability of the participants involved to work in a more participatory way. The cases also illustrate the macro-impact of micro-level innovations. For permanent and sustainable changes to occur, changes have to start where people live, work, do business, and raise their families:

Those innovators, those creative solutions, those leaders who would be professors and Nobel prize winners if born in a different class, in a different place, with a different race and a different gender, are out there at the grassroots level creating brilliant solutions and coping every day, and that's where we have to search for the key to tomorrow's solutions.

The Mega-Cities teams are the brokers and initiators of the transfer, replication, and adaptation of innovations to other places, within their cities and countries and to other cities in the world. The Mega-Cities network has met every year since 1987 to share workable solutions, refine their methodology, reflect on their experiences, deepen their theoretical and analytical understanding, and set priorities for the following year.³ There are currently thirty-four examples in which aspects from an innovation in one place are in the process of being adapted in another.

Community-Based Environmental Management in Asian Cities

Mike Douglass, University of Hawaii

In 1991 the University of Hawaii/East-West Center and university colleagues in Bandung (Indonesia), Bangkok (Thailand), Bombay (India), Hong Kong, Seoul (South Korea), and Taipei (Taiwan) began a long-term research project focusing on community-based environmental management in Asia. Colleagues in Colombo (Sri Lanka) and Manila (the Philippines) are also joining this effort.

The research has two major objectives: the first is to develop a better understanding of what poor people are doing on a household, inter-household, and community level in environmental management, which includes activities related to water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, drainage, and indoor air pollution. The second objective is to take this knowledge generated from communities and work with them to improve their environmental management capabilities, including linkages with NGOs and government as well as with other communities.

Using a comparative approach, it is possible to learn and draw conclusions

*Those innovators
... who would be
professors and Nobel
prize winners if born
in a different class,
in a different place,
with a different race
and a different
gender, are ... at the
grassroots level ...
and that's where we
have to search
for the key to
tomorrow's solutions*

— Janice Perlman

from these examples. Involving community people in this process of learning means that they can also benefit from these lessons. One set of lessons has to do with linkages between poverty alleviation and environmental improvements. Mike Douglass asked:

If you start to improve the environment, you will raise incomes dramatically. [For most] poor people . . . their community is their work place. If you improve that habitat, . . . it has automatic health benefits . . . that increase productivity

— Mike Douglass

Do you have to cure poverty before you improve the environment? Our studies show that the opposite may be true. If you start to improve the environment, you will raise incomes dramatically . . . [For most] poor people . . . their community is their work place. If you improve that habitat, you are improving the habitat for work itself. And of course it has automatic health benefits to children and to adults that increase productivity.

Community-based environmental management involves a shift in analytic and strategic emphasis away from conventional analyses of urban environmental management, which is largely based on allocative and regulatory roles of government, towards an emphasis on enhancing local practices at the community level. The concepts of community-based environmental management emphasize how household practices can lead to improved environmental conditions and how inter-household collective efforts can increase access to resources and minimize health risks. While the focus is on community-based initiatives, the roles of NGOs and the government are considered to be critical in sustaining community-based environmental management.

The following is a selection of preliminary research trends:

Household Level

- The poor are "not too busy being poor." They allocate significant household resources to activities

such as cleaning the household and communal lanes and securing potable water and fuel.

- The willingness of households to engage in community-wide environmental management is strongly related to people's perception of the security of tenure.
- Women take care of most day-to-day environmental management activities but are generally excluded from community and higher-level formal decisionmaking. Environmental management is greatly improved when women have greater decisionmaking roles and access to outside sources of support.

Inter-Household Level

- Maintaining inter-household networks of reciprocal exchange are critically important to environmental management.
- Many types of organizations exist within communities, and many of these can be mobilized for environmental management activities.

Community Organizations

- Community environmental management generally arises from systemic failures of government and markets. When governments and/or markets successfully intervene, community self-management declines.
- Community environmental management depends on linkages at higher levels of management.

Nongovernmental Organizations

- Communities have undertaken many environmental management tasks without NGOs. However,

without some form of active support through an intermediary, it is often difficult to sustain community management.

- NGOs are most effective in facilitating community-based efforts when they focus on empowering and strengthening community organizations in addition to providing technical assistance.

Government Level

- Many governments are authoritarian, paternalistic, and non-democratic. Genuine participation, with the community as a partner with decisionmaking powers, is extremely rare.
- It matters greatly whether local government officials are elected locally or are appointed.

Community-Based Development Experiences across Cities

Mona Serageldin, Harvard University

The Unit for Housing and Urbanization at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design is carrying out a major action research project. The field research consists of extensive interviews and visual documentation in a number of cities.⁴

Local governance and community-based approaches have been found to be the cornerstones of sustainable development in urban lower-income communities. Elected local councils, entrusted with broader powers and wider responsibilities, promote a sense of empowerment and accountability. Citizens feel that they have some control over the decisionmaking structures that affect their lives.

However, decentralization and empowerment are slow processes. They

require the reshaping of the institutional linkages between central and local governments and the establishment of new working relationships between local authorities and communities. Structuring these interfaces is a challenge that is currently being addressed by both industrialized and developing countries. As noted by Mona Serageldin:

In order to achieve sustainable community development, both money and expertise must get passed down from public and private agencies and larger NGOs to the community-based organizations. . . . In most developing countries this supportive framework is highly inadequate or nonexistent. Municipalities are, therefore, increasingly called on to shoulder the burden of promoting community-based organizations and providing them with the support and incentives they need to function.

The research draws on the experiences of a wide variety of community-based urban programs: (1) *community development corporations* (Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.); (2) *volunteer groups* (The Rainbow Initiative, Lima, Peru); (3) *neighborhood improvement associations* (Ehlal Community Improvement Initiative, Cairo, Egypt; and El Mourouj II Residents Association, Tunis, Tunisia); and (4) *public/private partnerships* (Neighborhood Partnership Initiative, Lublin, Poland; and Neighborhood Development Committees, Adjamé, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire).

These cases illustrate the diversity of approaches to structuring the interface between communities and municipalities. Each case is at a different stage of maturity but all belong to a new generation of urban programs that go beyond enabling approaches to creating supportive frameworks for community-based

Municipalities are . . . increasingly called on to shoulder the burden of promoting community-based organizations and providing them with the support and incentives they need to function

— Mona Serageldin

development. Box 4 provides a sample of lessons learned in these cases.

The cases demonstrate that successful outreach, mobilization, and organization efforts are based on the household as the building block and the neighborhood as the first functioning tier of an inclusive participatory structure that extends to the municipal government. An interface that reaches out to lower-income families must build on the informal processes and networks that structure their daily lives. A range of opportunities needs to be created to provide points of engagement for the integration of marginalized groups in the community development process. Some issues, such as the use of public open space, children's welfare, and sanitation, have been found to offer better points of engagement than others.

This inclusive approach is the best catalyst for the mobilization of residents, the emergence of civic leadership, and the consolidation of partnerships between the

public and private sectors. The interface between municipalities and communities that nurtures and supports the development of human resources and provides families with the mechanisms they need to improve their lives will make the most valuable contribution to sustainable community-based development, environmental improvement, and the development of a civil society.

Discussant Remarks

David Barkin, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, and Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

The key element for successful ecologically sustainable development is to counteract two of the major tendencies in the world economic development scene: concentration and homogenization. Globalization is transforming our societies into a single model, reproduced from one place to another quite independently of culture, resource base, altitude, latitude, or longitude. Even worse, the emerging integrated world economy into which we are being subsumed is controlled by a very small group of wealthy industrialists and financiers who are reorganizing the world's resources for their private benefit.

What we have heard in this forum is that we must cherish and promote *diversity*. We must strengthen diversity in all its dimensions, including size, productive structure, organizational structure, and culture. We must promote precisely the diversity of those resources—human, natural, produced, and inherited—that are most damaged, threatened, or destroyed by the homogenization process.

The urban environment must be reconceived as a network of human settlements with profound differences—a

Box 4. Lessons learned in community-based development

- To achieve sustainable community development, community-based organizations recognize that their effectiveness depends on their ability to interface with municipal authorities, network with intermediary NGOs, and access local private resources.
- Creative community-based initiatives occur whenever members of the community become convinced of their ability to control, shape, and improve their own living environment. As residents and leaders acquire skills and confidence, their initiatives broaden in complexity and scope.
- A leadership structure that represents the community is crucial to the improvement process. District government officials respond better to an organized community that demonstrates initiatives, makes commitments for sharing costs, and assumes responsibilities for maintaining improvements.
- Partnerships between community-based groups and municipalities depend on developing a shared vision, creating a partnership structure, and reaching an agreement between the city and the residents that spells out mutual responsibilities and commitments to carry out the plan.
- In the face of shrinking budgets and stiff competition for available funds, cities and community organizations in the more affluent nations will have to balance their reliance on an array of supportive programs by putting greater emphasis on mobilizing local resources. In the less affluent nations local governments and community groups will have to complement creative strategies to mobilize community resources with greater emphasis on networking and financial packaging to tap resources available outside their locality.

pattern of diversity to be strengthened. This network is a rich social fabric in which metropolitan areas depend upon and sustain the vitality of smaller centers. If the mega-cities are to prosper and to solve their problems and if the fantastic experiments and innovations we have heard about are going to be successful, the smaller units within the urban network must survive and thrive. The mega-cities will not become centers of vitality, of innovation and social progress, if the homogenizing forces of the globalizing economy are allowed to continue to destroy traditional productive structures and to devalue the resources and the people who are producing those things that do not have value for monopolistic or cartel-controlled international trade structures.

Strengthening local communities and productive systems—the resources and people who are being devalued by the patterns of international trade—requires very deliberate efforts. A number of speakers in this forum have described these kinds of efforts. But it also involves deliberate policy tools to create mechanisms to protect this kind of diversity. In an era of free trade, local production of basic goods must be protected along with inherited cultural patterns and produc-

tive systems. We have to believe that the initiatives of local groups are inherently valuable, that they are better at conserving local traditions and ecosystems than anyone else.

Central control cannot effectively implement processes and build structures to protect and promote diversity. One lesson we should learn is that diversity is best served from below. It is extraordinarily important for local organizations to join together through various kinds of intermediate organizations and with other communities so that their voices can be more effectively heard.

Individual projects that promote local initiatives and give louder voices to workers and the poor must become part of a broader strategy of greater local and national self-determination. Some means must be found to allow the under-represented majorities to continue to be valuable producers, to contribute to improving human welfare, rather than being shunted off into the marginal recesses of social existence as presently occurs in many societies. Unbridled free trade and markets don't offer answers to these needs. The international community has a responsibility to forge new ways for these communities to contribute to the common good. ■

What we have heard in this forum is that we must cherish and promote diversity. . . . One lesson we should learn is that diversity is best served from below. It is extraordinarily important for local organizations to join together . . . so that their voices can be more effectively heard

— David Barkin

Special Address

Ismail Serageldin, World Bank

...there is
no record
of modernization
without urbanization

— Ismail Serageldin

American writer Henry David Thoreau once wrote that cities are places in which many people can be alone together. This is an important insight into the nature of the urban phenomenon, where diversity can flourish, networks can and do transcend neighborhoods, and the scale of space and time can be expanded and collapsed at will. Cities are the unique invention of people to cater to that strange duality in human nature that Jacob Bronowski so cleverly identified: human beings want to think alone; on the other hand they must act and create in relation to others. They need the space to be themselves, but they cannot be themselves in the sense of acting in accordance with that defining self, except in the presence of others.

It is this unique characteristic that finds its expression in the city. Urban neighborhoods are not small villages. They have a different social texture than the rural communities whose arcadian names developers sometimes try to appropriate. Urban links among neighbors are often frail, despite proximity. These links are even now being assaulted by what Charles Correa rightly called a brutalizing and dehumanizing environment.⁵ People not only do not know their neighbors as well as they once did; they also are increasingly afraid to go out in the streets and worried about crime and vandalism. The civility inherent in the original urban phenomenon has ceded to the anonymity of form and the fear of strangers.

But what brought people together into the cities in the first place and why do they stay there? Surely it is not the brutalizing and dehumanizing environment.

It is not the alienation and anomie. It is not only the promise of better livelihoods, although that certainly plays a role. It is the *space of freedom* that allows people to be themselves and to interact with a much larger humanity. Even as we deal with the ills, these are the essential goods of cities that we must capture and maintain and promote—the freedoms that cities provide, their ability to tolerate the unconventional, to promote change, and to bring about modernization. And there is no record of modernization without urbanization.

If we want to protect and promote the precious feeling of links to others in cities, we come back to the question of the community in an urban setting. The essence of the question is how to reinforce the sense of community within cities. This is what this forum is all about. Of all the losses that a rampant and dehumanizing urbanization has cost us, the most important is the loss of a sense of community—whether it is the old neighborhood, the extended family, or the guild quarters of the old traditional cities. All are being replaced by the anonymity of the large metropolis, with numbered streets and the scale of the motorized expressway. This is where the alienation, the angst of the contemporary urban condition, originate.

What is this word “community” to which we keep returning? To commune is “to be one with,” “to act with others.” Using today’s dictionary definition, a community can be either an interacting population of various kinds of individuals within a common location (and here we are back to neighborhoods and the geographic definition of space) or a group of

people with common characteristics or interests. The latter is also a network.

I was fascinated by the cases being discussed during the forum. We here are referring to both kinds of community: communities as networks of people and communities as people in contiguous space. Networks are, of course, essential. Within cities, multiple overlays of networks create exciting possibilities of accumulating knowledge, strengthening alliances, and building all those different things that enrich our lives. The networks make urban life exciting and so different from the stultifying reality of village life despite the latter's frequent romanticization. A vibrant urban environment that addresses the needs of people must be rich in these network communities. We must encourage and nurture them. They are the essence of the urban condition.

However, at the same time, we also need the geographic variety of community, which promotes feelings of kinship among neighbors, enables action to take place on the ground, and allows communities to reclaim their geographic space. The result is to maintain and humanize cities rather than dehumanize them.

During the opening plenary of the second ESD conference, U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros spoke about the pervasive sense of dislocation and disjointedness and the need for social justice to be the cornerstone of a sense of community.⁶ It is this sense of loss of community that has become a metaphor for a lost quality of life.

We decry the lack of interaction with other people, whether because of being caught in the "rat-race," not having enough freedom to have quality time with cherished ones, or losing common purpose. The metaphor for the lost quality of life is precisely that lost sense of commu-

nity, since we can argue that on the level of material well-being there have been improvements. Undoubtedly, in the period between the 19th and 20th centuries, there have been massive improvements in the physical conditions of countless neighborhoods, but many decry the loss of that strong sense of kinship and belonging that characterized the past.

We need to go beyond the physical manifestation of lifestyle toward the importance of reinforcing these links that make us whole. To me perhaps the most important distinction is between what the speakers mean when they talked about a community and what developers mean when they talk about planned communities. Developers are thinking in terms of a nicely organized physical space to which other people are going to come from somewhere and be deposited into.

In my day as a practicing urban planner about twenty-five years ago, this was called planned urban development. It was not really urban, but it was development, and it certainly was planned. It was not, however, "community" in the sense that we use the word today. Now I see "planned communities" of the developer variety everywhere. Community in the sense of linked people is not common enough.

When we go back to this importance of community in the city, we need to reverse the process that developers use. Rather than start with the physical space and then bring in the people, we must start with the people, nurture the invisible links among them, and encourage them to take charge of their physical environment, reclaim it, and humanize it.

The last series of case studies that Mona Serageldin showed us were compelling examples of how situations of challenge can be mutually reinforcing in both senses of "community." The ability

*If we want to protect
and promote
the precious feeling
of links to others
in cities, we come
back to the question
of the community
in an urban setting*

— Ismail Serageldin

*Bringing people
together
for a common purpose
through joint action
creates the kinds
of bonds that enable
community members
to reclaim the space
in which they live.
This is not just
desirable;
it is necessary
—Ismail Serageldin*

to reclaim the space between those ugly slab blocks of the public housing environment that she illustrated can unite people, regenerate that sense of community, and transform the neighborhood. These situations became entry points that jump-started a process of innovation and renewal in the city to which support could then be provided from the outside.

By reasserting the importance of community, in the sense that we are talking about it right now, we assert the key solutions to many problems. One additional example recently in the press was a midwestern U.S. city that adopted the designs of a distinguished American architect. Simply redesigning the street alignments and putting in a few fences, lights, and cul-de-sacs lowered the crime rate by over 70 percent. What the architect did, in fact, was to stop the fragmentation of the thoroughway—the grid of streets that enabled the cars to cut through the physical fabric of the neighborhoods, thereby encouraging strangers and criminals to enter and drive-by shootings to take place—and to reclaim the space for people. The realigned clusters grouped a relatively small number of households, enabling the people to get to know one another and to establish common ground.

The article commented on the fact that the plan was initially considered a joke: “You mean you are going to actually lower the crime rate by painting some fences, putting up some lights, and creating a few pedestrian areas?” The answer is yes. Why? Because doing these seemingly mundane things can help to create real communities.

We want to see thousands of such efforts to reclaim the neighborhood, to reclaim the city; efforts arising from the grassroots, building from the bottom up, not from the top down. What do we need

to bring them about? Articulation of a community is best done not through some ethnic, religious, cultural, or other manifestation, but through joint action.

Bringing people together for a common purpose through joint action creates the kinds of bonds that enable community members to reclaim the space in which they live. This is not just desirable; it is necessary. It is a necessity because governments cannot meet all the needs of the people; therefore, whether nongovernmental entities or multilateral international agencies, we need to create partnerships with local people to solve problems. It is necessary because governments have become too small and too big. They are too small to deal with the global problems of trade, and they are too big to deal with the problems of their people as individuals and as members of households.

We need to assert the role of citizenship and joint action with and within communities because they empower individuals. They also strengthen civil society, and we have ample evidence that the strengthening of civil society is itself the best guarantor of a responsive government. A strong civil society is also the best guarantor of a long-term and sustainable form of socioeconomic development, not just for the local community but for a society as well. The quality of civil society lays the foundation for real civic action and a sense of civic awareness. Civil society is not only about rights but also about public responsibility.

The evidence for the benefits of a healthy civil society is overwhelming. Robert Putnam's book, *Making Democracy Work*, is an empirical study of twenty years of variations in regional government in relation to civil society in Italy.⁷ This fascinating study makes clear that if a sense of community has developed

through horizontally based, voluntary associations of people, such as choral groups or soccer clubs, these bonds create a framework that not only keeps governments accountable but also generates an enabling environment for people, local groups, and businesses to flourish.

Let me discuss the role of the World Bank in this process. Statutorily, the Bank is an intergovernmental organization whose mandate is to lend to the governments of its member states—not to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) but to the national governments of its members. When the Bank wanted to deal with the private sector, it had to create a wholly separate institution called the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which was statutorily mandated to lend or provide equity to the private sector without government guarantees.

Nor will the Bank ever become a large-scale NGO. That is not its function nor its comparative advantage. Nevertheless, the Bank as an institution has a major role to play in the context of what we are discussing here. It can help to create an enabling environment on an international scale for the poor and the weak among nations. Through its dialogue with the governments of each of its member states, it can also help to create an enabling environment within which a partnership can take place between the public and private sectors, between the national and the local levels, and between the government and nongovernmental organizations.

The World Bank as an institution is fully committed to the fact that an economy cannot be effectively managed centrally. We also believe that the ruthless efficiency of the market as an allocative mechanism has to be tempered by a nurturing and caring state. We want the state to create an enabling environment to

allow local communities to flourish, to allow the private sector to work, and at the same time to protect the weak and the vulnerable in that society.

The Bank has a role in this, but, ultimately, what is the limit of our intervention? In 1989 the World Bank introduced the idea of good governance, about which there was a major debate at the time.⁸ Good governance was seen as a bit of a departure from our mandate, which states that we have no right to interfere in the domestic political affairs of member states.

However, we did not define good governance in the specific terms of whether a member state has a single chamber or bicameral chambers, a presidential system or parliamentary system, or a number of political parties. We defined governance in terms such as transparency, accountability, rule of law, institutional pluralism, and participation. For each of these we could make an unassailable case that, if our mandate is to promote economic development in the narrow sense of the term, then economic development is best served by a government that has these attributes.

The creation of an enabling environment is another area in which we can intervene with our member governments. If you believe in sustainable development, the last thing you want people to do when they think about development in a country is to look to an outside agency, the Bank or otherwise, because whatever is going to happen has to happen locally at the grassroots. Sustainable action, we know, has to be "owned" by the people, and by the people at the local level.

Only in this way will there be real development that is sustainable. Outsiders can come in and can support and help, but only support and help. I have

*... governments have
become too small
and too big.*

*They are too small
to deal with the global
problems of trade,
and they are
too big to deal
with the problems
of their people
as individuals
and as members
of households*

— Ismail Serageldin

*... your experience—
we want to learn
from it.
Your dedication—
we want to emulate it.
And your example—
we are inspired by it
—Ismail Serageldin*

frequently used the metaphor that development is like a tree. It can be nurtured in its growth only by feeding its roots, not by pulling on its branches. We can all help to create that enabling environment to feed the roots, but, ultimately, the tree has to be homegrown. It is not one that can be imported. It is not a plastic tree; it has to grow in the real soil of that society.

The World Bank believes in participation. We can make a strong case to governments that, if they promote participation, if they involve people in the design as well as the implementation of projects, then the chances of a project's being successful are greatly increased. It is not a political matter. It is purely a matter of observation and empirical evidence—it works better this way.

In her review of 121 water projects, Deepa Narayan found that projects that involved participation performed better, and the projects that performed best of all were the ones that involved and empowered women.⁹ The least effective projects were those done in a technocratic way. Her findings underline the importance of participation and provide further ammunition for the argument that we need to talk to our governments not just about why they should tolerate participation—but why they should, in fact, support and nurture participation at the grassroots.

What are we doing beyond that? During this forum Deepa Narayan reported on the Participatory Development Learning Group, which has been an ongoing activity in the Bank. I am happy to say that over 30 percent of all the projects that were approved by the World Bank last year involve NGOs in their design or implementation.

We have also put in place some efforts to explore alternative ways of doing business including the use of pilot phases in to the project cycle as alternatives to the conventional sequence of identification, preparation, appraisal, implementation, and evaluation.

The issue of scaling-up into public policy—a point that Janice Perlman raised—is something else that the World Bank can do and can do extremely well, perhaps better than anyone else. This is the point at which the partnership between the Bank and community-based organizations is very important. The Bank has a constant, ongoing dialogue on public policy, macroeconomic policy, trade regimes, and fiscal deficits with member governments. We have the ability to feed the lessons that you learn—the experiences and observations of community-based organizations—into the policy dialogue with governments to strengthen the enabling environment that will make the nurturing of your activities not only more possible, but more accepted.

In conclusion, your deliberations here are extremely important, and my colleagues and I are listening with great interest. Exchanging the lessons of your experiences not only enriches each of you and strengthens your collective consciousness, but also educates us. I hope this also will lay the foundations of our future actions by creating the bonds of new networks—new communities in the broad sense of communities as networks—among community activists like yourselves. On behalf of the World Bank I want to say: your experience—we want to learn from it. Your dedication—we want to emulate it. And your example—we are inspired by it. ■

Session 3 Learning from International Support

Chaired by K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, Session 3 explored the experiences gained by international programs that support community initiatives. Each of the three speakers in this session represented a regional or global program that offers financial, technical, and informational/network support to communities. The speakers described some of the major lessons they are learning in the process of supporting community initiatives.

In his introduction to the session Josef Leitmann provided several examples of how the World Bank is making progress in translating into practice a number of concepts and ideas about community involvement in environmental management. He noted that institutional concerns that community involvement might jeopardize the quality of the work need to be balanced by the benefits of learning from and building on local knowledge and experience.

Strengthening Community and Municipal Alliances

Jeb Brugmann, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) has embarked on a worldwide research program called the Local Agenda 21 Model Communities Programme.¹⁰ In this initiative ICLEI will be working with 20 municipalities around the world to design and test sustainable development planning processes that draw upon the expertise of communities in those municipalities to do long-term planning of services in those communities. Over a period of three years these processes will be fully documented

in each city and jointly evaluated to establish a sustainable development planning approach. The alliance between community forces and the municipality is likely to be the most effective alliance to strengthen community forces and protect them from the intervening forces of the market. While community-based organizations or NGOs may have legitimacy in the communities they represent, they do not have the democratic legitimacy of a municipality. However, to be most effective municipal institutions need to integrate the community into their planning processes.

At the beginning of the Local Agenda 21 Model Communities Programme, ICLEI carried out an investigative survey to look for examples of institutional reform processes that had been developed by municipalities independently of any international program or process. A number of distinct examples were found, among which there were some striking similarities.

One similarity was that a number of municipalities seeking institutional reform have created some type of intermediary institution that includes representatives from the community, NGOs, and other stakeholders, including the private sector. The municipality gives a formal mandate to this intermediate body to engage in planning on cross-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary issues that the municipality cannot effectively plan itself because of formal governmental constraints. The work of this body can, in time, lead to the overall reform of the municipality itself and its planning process, including its budgeting and project development process:

The municipality is ultimately the recipient of the macroeconomic mandate from above that is designed in places like Washington, negotiated in places like Bogotá, and then delivered to a city like Cali

— Jeb Brugmann

The municipality is ultimately the recipient of the macroeconomic mandate from above that is designed in places like Washington, negotiated in places like Bogotá, and then delivered to a city like Cali. . . . So the municipality is positioned as an intermediary between the top-down forces and the bottom-up forces. . . . If we get a stronger collaboration going between the users of infrastructure and the municipality itself, we can position the municipalities to say "No, we won't accept that kind of infrastructure project." If we have enough municipalities articulating themselves in that kind of way, then ultimately we will reform the way that an institution like the World Bank has to go about planning its projects and negotiating with central governments.

One of ICLEI's roles is to help to develop a variety of tools that municipalities can use in establishing this kind of stakeholder group and using this group to plan a service area. The service area is selected on the basis of a priority-setting process driven by users of that service in the community. The communities tend to be low-income neighborhoods of the city. The service area selected is not necessarily related to the environmental issue and, in many cases, may be a social issue. ICLEI's primary role, funded by the International Research Center and UNDP, is to document what happens in this process. At the end of two or three years of documentation, observation, and self-evaluation with the municipalities and the participants in these stakeholder groups, ICLEI will try to come up with some conclusions about what kinds of reforms need to take place in municipalities so that they can act as a strengthening force for community-based participation in planning.

Funding by ICLEI to municipalities for this project will be modest and limited to

helping them to staff the project. The promise of international funding changes people's motivations to carry out this process. In selecting cities to participate in this project, ICLEI specifically sought out cities that were going to do this because their cities were in crisis or because they had the political will to do it, not because ICLEI would be providing the financial resources to make it happen. It will be useful to assess how the dynamics change when this approach is used rather than when significant funding is provided from outside to develop this kind of process.

Lessons Learned in the Environmental Health Project

May Yacoob, Environmental Health Project

The Environmental Health Project (EHP), formerly the Water and Sanitation Project (WASH) and Vector Biology Control (VBC) Project, continues to build upon the methodologies, approaches, and lessons learned during fifteen years of experience. In addition to water supply, sanitation, solid waste, and wastewater, EHP has the capability to work on tropical diseases, air pollution, food hygiene, hazardous materials, occupational health, and injury prevention. Running parallel to these technical areas are cross-cutting themes such as institutional and human resource development, community participation, and financial management.

EHP's work has been primarily in countries where the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) works. EHP provides both long- and short-term technical assistance in response to requests from USAID missions, often initiated by local NGOs who approach USAID.

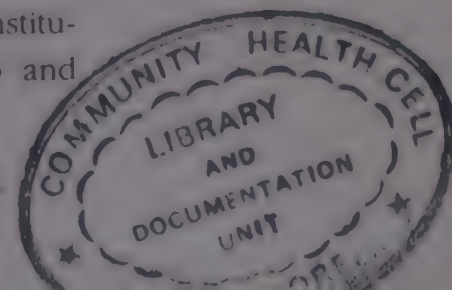
The following are four of the major lessons learned in WASH and EHP's work worldwide with communities and community-based organizations:

- *Community-level approaches need effective support.* There are far too many examples of approaches to community participation that are essentially the divestiture of municipal and government responsibilities onto communities, NGOs, or others who are willing to take on these tasks. Loading more activities onto communities, especially poor peri-urban communities, in addition to what they already have to do is not a sustainable solution.
- *People are an important source of data.* People are a powerful primary source of data that is just as scientific as other types of data. Gathering this kind of data is important, and having people present it and be part of the dialogue about their problems results in more useful and sustainable methodologies.
- *NGOs cannot do everything well and at low cost.* The common perception that NGOs can accomplish everything, and inexpensively, is not borne out by WASH and EHP's experience. NGOs tend to know how to carry out certain types of technical activities, such as water and sanitation projects, and do these well. However, while NGOs are often very skilled at bypassing governments and municipalities, they often lack the expertise to bring those actors together, which is necessary for community-based activities to be sustainable.
- *Communication channels need to be strengthened.* The greatest con-

straint WASH and EHP have found to doing effective work is the lack of channels of communication among communities, local intermediary NGOs, local governments, and district governments. There is an even wider communication gap between the intermediaries, whether governmental or nongovernmental, and the policymakers above them.

EHP is currently using and developing the following four methodologies:

- *Locally based demand.* Locally based demand (LBD) is an approach for evaluating and implementing environmental health interventions. EHP believes an approach that starts with addressing and influencing people's demand is more likely to be effective than supply-led approaches. Demand is often interpreted purely as an economic concept of people's willingness to buy goods and services at various price levels. USAID's commitment to human security and democracy, as well as economic growth, requires that a demand-led strategy address more than purely economic concerns.
- *Community environmental management.* EHP works with communities to define their environmental problems and to develop priorities among those problems. EHP also has the capacity to develop the capabilities of NGOs and governments to work effectively with communities through training workshops, capacity-building exercises, and policy dialogue.
- *Institutionalization of new behaviors.* New behaviors, both at the level of communities and institutions, take time to develop and



[EHP tries to] bring together the people who are likely to affect environmental conditions in that community. . . . We find there are a number of skill areas that are sorely missing with people in that critical role
—May Yacoob

need to be reinforced and encouraged. EHP does much of the guiding during this process by holding short-term training workshops, developing new approaches, allowing people to try to institutionalize changes, and assessing what has and has not worked.

- *Developing new methods of risk assessment.* For EHP risk assessment is markedly different from the risk assessment that has traditionally been used in the model developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EHP is beginning to standardize new risk assessment methodologies that use qualitative and well as quantitative data and take locally perceived risks into account.

A major role for EHP is often to bring together the key people who are likely to affect conditions at the community level. However, it is not enough just to bring people together. People also need to learn skills to turn them into enablers, so that they can work with policymakers. Policymakers need to learn how to develop policies that will enable them to work effectively with communities. EHP tries to:

. . . bring together the people who are likely to affect environmental conditions in that community. . . . We find there are a number of skill areas that are sorely missing with people in that critical role. Number one is their total inability to work as a team. . . . [Another is] that people at the intermediary level are afraid to go down to communities. When they're not able to give people what they're asking for, they don't bother going out. . . . The third area is problem-solving. . . . to become enablers rather than providers. . . . We have been able to identify skills and train people in those skills, and it does make a difference.

The Mega-Cities Project: Transferring Workable Approaches

Akhtar Badshah, The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.

Janice Perlman's presentation on The Mega-Cities Project focused on the process of documenting innovative projects and key lessons learned in these projects.¹¹ This presentation provides information on the process of transferring and replicating projects under different conditions in a number of cities and on the role of The Mega-Cities Project.

The Mega-Cities strategy has been fairly conventional in identifying, documenting, and disseminating information about approaches that work. However, the project has gone on to transfer innovations from one city to another. Through the transfer process people learn from one another in a peer-to-peer model. The role of the Mega-Cities coordinators and staff has been to act as catalysts, brokers, and at times supporters. In some cases the transfer takes on its own shape and continues without The Mega-Cities Project's support or involvement.

The Mega-Cities project has learned that transfers are a viable tool for building the capacity of NGOs and of individuals working in these NGOs and are successful in a number of ways. Non-profit organizations are acquiring new skills. They are finding new partners, and individual leaders are being recognized and supported for their work.

Decisions about which innovations to transfer are usually made through the interactions of the network of coordinators in the eighteen mega-cities currently participating in The Mega-Cities Project. Experience has shown that transfers are not just the replication and adaptation of solutions. New approaches, new projects, and new solutions often emerge

during the process of adapting models to other local situations.

One example of a transfer involves urban leaders in New York City and Los Angeles. Twenty-six transfers have been initiated by community leaders identified in New York City and Los Angeles as part of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation-funded Urban Leadership for the 21st Century Project. In each city urban leaders are involved in a range of projects including social services, greening, youth, and health programs. Using start-up grants, these leaders are replicating their approaches in other neighborhoods. Ten transfers have been initiated within New York City, eight within Los Angeles, and eight between the two cities. Both cities have multi-ethnic and multi-racial problems stemming from the fact that different ethnic and racial groups do not always have a history of talking with each other. In this project leaders from diverse backgrounds have managed to go beyond these cultural barriers as they have teamed up together to engage in developing and providing solutions to urban problems.

The Mega-Cities Project encourages local organizations interested in transferring solutions to raise the necessary local resources. Building on an initial grant from UNDP/LIFE, the Manila Mega-Cities coordinator raised three times the initial amount by approaching United Nations Volunteers (UNV) to carry out a transfer related to waste management. When the Manila Mega-Cities group learned about the Zabbaleen program in Cairo, they immediately saw the need to send rag-pickers from Manila to Cairo to learn more. The group was able to use some of the funds raised to send nine people to Cairo, including leaders from the scavenger community.

The Mega-Cities core office in New York City is not engaged directly in the

transfers. Local leaders are better able to understand which technologies are appropriate and how these solutions might be adapted and replicated in their own settings. The core office may be asked to provide assistance such as helping to prepare a proposal to access funds so that cities can start the first phase of the project. In addition:

What we have learned is that, to affect urban transformation, we have to scale out horizontally through replication and scale up vertically into public policy. The Mega-Cities Project has focused on peer-to-peer exchange by doing transfers. Now we have to focus on giving voice to implementers at the local level to interact with policymakers in different settings. All of these groups already have connections to their local politicians and have access to policymakers, but their relationship is unequal because they are often seen only as implementers. By [our] bringing them together under a transfer process and creating a network of urban leaders, they have a different voice and sit at the table at a higher level.

*By . . . creating
a network
of urban leaders,
[local implementers]
have a different voice
and sit at the table at a
higher level*

— Akhtar Badshah

Discussant Remarks

Ximena de la Barra, UNICEF

Let me start by characterizing the current state of world development. There are more than 1 billion poor people in the world, and most of them live in developing countries.¹² Seven hundred million of these poor people go hungry, and 15 million die of starvation every year. Every year 13 million children die of preventable diseases.

The richest one-fifth of the world currently receive 150 times more income than the poorest one-fifth. The industrialized nations, with approximately 20 percent of the world's people, are responsible for

Clearly, the causes of poverty do not lie within poor communities themselves. Therefore, we should enlarge the scope of our vision and work simultaneously at the community and global scale. We should move from talking about survival to talking about development

— Ximena de la Barra

three-quarters of the world's energy use, two-thirds of all greenhouse gas production, and 90 percent of the production of fluorocarbons, which threaten the ozone layer. This is our challenge.

The presenters in this forum have eloquently presented a wide range of successful initiatives supporting communities, all of them initiatives that tend to alleviate the impacts of the current economically unsustainable, socially destructive, and environmentally unsound development model. The initiatives that have been described in this forum are coping and survival strategies. All of them are magnificent examples, yet all are on a very small scale.

How is the process of scaling-up going to happen? How can diverse community development models overcome the global economic model being supported with all the power of the economic interests that are represented in the Bretton Woods institutions?

This forum has not examined the causes of poverty or discussed alternatives to the current global economic model that exacerbates poverty and plunges developing nations into a spiral of increasing financial and social debt. Clearly, the causes of poverty do not lie within poor communities themselves. Therefore, we should enlarge the scope of our vision and work simultaneously at the community and global scale. We should move from talking about survival to talking about development. This means:

- *Restructuring aid patterns.* For the past 10 years, bilateral contributions have averaged 0.35 percent of GNP, which constitutes half of what nations have committed themselves to contribute to development assistance. Total aid was

approximately US\$45 billion in 1992. As a point of reference, according to recent UN sources, total debt was US\$1.33 trillion in 1992, and between 1984 and 1990 the net transfer of resources from the South to the North was US\$155 billion. Bilateral donors allocate only 7 percent of their aid to human development priorities, and developing countries only about 13 percent of their national budgets. The United Nations is advocating an increase to 20 percent of expenditures for basic human needs both at the developing country level and in overseas development assistance.

- *Making policies compatible.* Many developing countries are currently undergoing structural adjustment that imposes reductions in government functions, social expenditures, and subsidies to the poor. These requirements are not compatible with the need for increased expenditures on health and education. There is an urgent need to make sustainable human development policies and macroeconomic policies compatible.
- *Enabling governments to enable community action.* All governmental levels need assistance to help them enable community action. As described by speakers in this forum, communities are providing a much bigger share of services than governments and are paying higher financial and health costs for these services. For communities to be able to provide for themselves and to improve their living conditions, they need to have access to credit, technology, and training. Governments have a

responsibility to provide this support and to promote equity in access to resources.

- *Encouraging partnerships between governments and communities.* Community participation and empowerment are critical factors in program expansion and sustainability. However, urban issues such as water, sanitation, and land management cannot be handled by communities alone. These issues need to be addressed at a city-wide level with a sharing of power and responsibilities.
- *Promoting democracy and social cohesion.* Democracy and social cohesion are promoted and strengthened in the partnership between communities and local governments. Cities can become agents for social cohesion and for the reconciliation of competing interests if municipal governments can guarantee an equitable distribution of resources and access to decisionmaking.
- *Increasing investments and expenditures.* Increased investment in urban infrastructure and increases in budgetary allocations for social services are needed. Additional resources are required to improve services in health and nutrition, reproductive health and population, education, and water supply and sanitation.

There is an urgent need to address the underlying causes of poverty, to review and analyze the current development model imposed on poor communities, and to search for a new model that does not exploit the environment or the majority of people—a model based on justice.

Discussant Remarks

Kamla Chowdhry, Centre for Science and the Environment

If we are really interested in development then, as Ximena de la Barra said, we need to look for the basic causes of poverty. It is clear that the causes of poverty are not to be found only within poor countries or only in poor nations but are much wider in scope. This broader picture needs much more discussion. Some conference participants have suggested that the World Bank needs to make changes in the way it operates. It seems to me that the Bank has taken the first step, and all that one can do in this major process of change is to take the first step. I think they have become conscious of participation.

At the same time it is not enough to think of participation as a technique. Participation is essentially the inner conversion of a person. One needs to be able to look at the world and people and problems from the point of view of the poor—to acquire the skill of listening to the voices of poverty. I think the second step for the Bank is to acquire this skill and to look at what causes poverty and what problems poverty creates.

We have discussed the relationships between horizontal organizations and vertical organizations in the context of community participation. Colonial countries, such as India and many African countries, have inherited an administration and bureaucracy that are very vertical. The distance from the top to the bottom of this bureaucracy consists of many steps.

In Session 1 and the panel that followed there was a great deal of discussion about horizontal groups. Communities gather strength from one another and are able to voice and handle their concerns together. Another next step in the

*... it is not enough
to think
of participation
as a technique.
Participation is
essentially the inner
conversion of a person.
One needs to be able
to look at the world ...
from the point of view
of the poor—
to acquire the skill
of listening
to the voices of
poverty*

—Kamla Chowdhry

development process is to find ways in which vertical and horizontal organizations can work better with one another.

Horizontal organizations, such as many NGOs and community-based organizations, have the basic quality of being fearless. In horizontal organizations people can express support for one another, whereas in vertical organizations people are always afraid of their supervisors and of losing their jobs, and they lack confidence. The development processes in terms of empowering people, being fearless, and inspiring confidence are more likely to come through the work of horizontal organizations. Many horizontal organizations are small and micro in scope. However, they have the disadvantages of being small as well as the advantages—they do not have the political power to change larger policies and the larger reality. NGOs are too imprisoned in the micro model. They

need to strive towards having a major political impact in terms of changing systems, culture, and society.

Much better linkages need to be developed between micro and macro systems and organizations, and there are some excellent examples of this all over the world. One example from India is the linkage between the National Dairy Development Board and village cooperatives that sell milk. Many of the village cooperatives, made up primarily of women, have moved on to projects that address health, education, and other concerns. The micro level system—the village cooperatives—is working well and is linked to a very powerful macro organization, the National Dairy Development Board. The Board negotiates with donor agencies and organizations like the World Bank. This kind of linkage is very important because it provides the advantages of both micro and macro systems. ■

Conclusion

Reflections on the Forum

Michael A. Cohen, World Bank

In preparing for this week's Environmentally Sustainable Development Conference and Associated Events, we have tried to assemble a diverse group of people with many different perspectives to debate, to try to sift out what is and is not working, and to come to a better understanding of some of the constraints to making improvements.

Many of us are trying to help to shift the paradigm of development, since in many ways the existing paradigm is not sustainable and is not acceptable. As Mahbub ul-Haq said in the main ESD conference, it makes no sense to sustain a status quo that is unjust since to do so is not sustainable.¹³ It is not simply changing the paradigm in an intellectual sense; it is also changing the paradigm in a political sense.

Ximena de la Barra talked about the quality of the relationships between countries in the North and South and the structure of external assistance. We need to remind ourselves in an empirical way what is really occurring. She spoke about the percentages of GDP being provided by developed countries in development assistance. It is very low—too low. Nevertheless, there are enormous flows going to developing countries. Last year private sector flows were about US\$150 billion compared with aid flows of about US\$50 billion. Of these aid flows the World Bank's share was approximately US\$1 billion, with annual commitments of roughly US\$20 billion. Last year arms sales to developing countries were about US\$350 billion, so we need to keep in mind

where we fit into a much broader framework.

We also need to examine aid as it relates to investments already made. The value of the existing stock of housing infrastructure in the cities of developing countries is estimated to be about US\$3 trillion. There is an additional investment to this existing stock of about US\$150 billion per year. Of that US\$150 billion, each year the aid flows amount to about US\$5 billion.

We should not assume that aid flows are the principle determining factor in the structure, quality, and difficulties found in cities. There is already an enormous stock of housing and other infrastructure and ongoing investments in this infrastructure. We have to be honest and realistic about whether many of these problems are going to be solved by external resources or whether, in truth, they are going to be resolved by people in countries who are investing and carrying out their own economic activities. Even a small improvement to the existing stock will produce a tremendous rate of return and will be of tremendous benefit.

While the Bank is part of the resource transfer, our role is really in the area of policy because it is clear that what affects the use and management of the existing stock is policy, not a number of small projects. We are working with governments to increase their institutional capacity to do a better job of managing the enormous stock of investments already made and to make their policies more effective in the long run. We also need to continue to work towards ensuring that all the aid flows in any particular year encourage sustainability.

... [the Bank] can contribute to changes at the policy level and urge local and national governments to broaden the debate and increase their general level of understanding. We are trying to create a larger space in which people and institutions can come together to debate and negotiate some of these important questions

—Michael A. Cohen

The Bank has been working in cities for about twenty-five years and is currently working in 11,800 communities in the developing world in areas such as urban development, infrastructure, housing, water supply, sanitation, and social services. However, this involvement is rather thin in any particular city because, given the broad stock of investment, our incremental assistance is not all that significant.

Hopefully, we can contribute to changes at the policy level and urge local and national governments to broaden the debate and increase their general level of understanding. We are trying to create a larger space in which people and institutions can come together to debate and negotiate some of these important questions.

Most of us participating in this forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development either work in organizations or perceive ourselves as helping to mediate the relationship between aid and what happens in communities. Most of us are not from the communities of which we speak. It is important to reflect on the role of these mediating structures. There is real leadership in certain kinds of NGOs that are trying to bring communities and these various constituencies together.

The sessions in this forum have brought out the importance of networking among all these mediating structures and of networking among communities themselves. Part of the coalition-building process must involve strengthening these connections.

It is the mobilization around real issues, and around the substance that we have been discussing, that largely constitutes sustainability at the community level. Questions arise such as: Why can't governments at the local and the national

levels help communities instead of smothering them intentionally or unintentionally? How can we support the process of assisting communities? And how can we use the many interesting cases that have been presented? Building on the commonalities may provide the impetus to move ahead. From the Bank's point of view this forum is clearly just a start. We want the issues raised and debated in this week's activities and this forum to contribute to the broader debate.

The Bank has an enormous number of activities in process right now. About seventy projects in the next three years are expected to be urban environmental projects. Whether they will be successful depends on how well we do our job to make sure the lessons generated in these discussions are incorporated in these projects.

We hope to design a new urban environmental practice of which we can collectively feel proud. In terms of the basic foundation of these efforts a large part of that has to be a participatory process. What has been said in this forum over the past two days is a particularly important part of this week's Environmentally Sustainable Development Conference and Associated Events.

Issues and Lessons

Josef Leitmann, World Bank

Some of the key issues raised during the forum included:

- *World views.* The theories of community development and environmental sustainability often have different roots, approaches, and languages. This can lead to misunderstandings and missed opportunities. More effort will need to go into developing a common perspective and approach if there is to

be such a thing as sustainable community development.

- *Globalization and free trade.* Economic vulnerability and cultural homogenization were cited as two consequences of economic liberalization by Alicia Bárcena, David Barkin, Jeb Brugmann, and Nancy Skinner. Community empowerment was proposed as a counterweight.
- *Indicators.* Jeb Brugmann proposed that six questions be used to evaluate whether an intervention contributes to sustainable community development: (1) Does the project aim to create active citizens or passive clients and consumers? (2) Does the project address locally defined needs, or does it impose its own requirements? (3) Will the project strengthen institutions of local self-governance? (4) Will the project replace an indigenous system that already works? (5) What are the life-cycle effects of the activity? (6) Who benefits economically?
- *Governance.* Speakers raised issues related to governance. These included the need to increase the "voice" of communities after they organize, the fact that neocolonial political systems were not designed to empower communities, and the point that democratization and decentralization are the ultimate objectives of community empowerment.
- *Role of donors.* Several speakers expressed the idea that the appropriate role of donors (and governments) is to participate in ongoing community initiatives not vice versa. At several points the appropriate role of the World Bank was discussed. Deepa Narayan summarized the Bank's participatory learn-

ing process, and there was some discussion of the organizational changes that might be necessary to enhance the Bank's ability to work with communities.

Key lessons learned included:

- *There are limits to working with government.* Yolanda Garcia, Arif Hasan, Sheela Patel, and Nancy Skinner outlined the constraints that make it difficult for communities to work with governments, for example, inappropriate standards, suspicion, political influence of non-community interests, bureaucratic standard operating procedures, and lack of communication and cooperation. Yolanda Garcia also suggested a successful strategy of lobbying, alliance building, and educating public officials.
- *Nonetheless, municipal government is the key entry point.* Both community and donor representatives endorsed the notion that the local level of government must serve as the legitimate entity for supporting community-level environmental initiatives, coordinating with larger investments and activities, and facilitating communication among communities and donors.
- *There are limits to working with donors.* Arif Hasan and Sheela Patel focused on the risks of communities dealing with external supporters. These include the imposition of external agendas on organized communities, cultural differences resulting in misunderstandings, the burden of complex monitoring and evaluation procedures, and the inability of donors to keep up with rapidly changing local conditions.

Donors must be willing to let go and place more trust in the ability of communities to identify and implement change

—Josef Leitmann

- *External support will require more trust.* Donors must be willing to let go and place more trust in the ability of communities to identify and implement change. This will require a modification in donor behavior by (1) having respect for and building on community priorities; (2) decentralizing project management to local staff; and (3) simplifying and harmonizing requirements for monitoring, reporting, and evaluating.
- *More attention needs to be paid to gender.* In many communities women, children, the elderly, and the disabled are most affected by urban environmental insults. Often, women are also the key to solutions and are the most effective neighborhood-level environmental managers. These facts need to be recognized and integrated into the design and support of local initiatives. ■

Notes

1. For additional information on this ICLEI project see Jeb Brugmann's presentation in Session 3.

2. For more information see Janice Perlman and others, *Environmental Justice: Promising Solutions at the Intersection of Environment and Poverty* (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 1995).

3. For more information on these transfers see Akhtar Badshah's presentation in Session 3.

4. For more information see Mona Serageldin, *Community-Based Development Experiences across Cities*. Prepared by the Unit for Housing and Urbanization, Harvard University, Graduate School of Design. USAID Office of Environment and Urban Programs, Publication no. PN-ABU-443 (Washington, D.C.: USAID, 1994).

5. Charles Correa, "Great City, Terrible Place," *The Human Face of the Urban Environment: Proceedings of the Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development*. ESD Proceedings Series no. 6 (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, forthcoming 1995).

6. Henry Cisneros, "Urban Poverty and Urban Environment in the North," *The Human Face of the Urban Environment: Proceedings of the Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development*.

7. Robert D. Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti, *Making Democracy*

Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1993).

8. See *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crises to Sustainable Growth; A Long-Term Perspective Study* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1989).

9. Deepa Narayan, *The Contribution of People's Participation: Evidence from 121 Rural Water Supply Projects*. ESD Occasional Paper no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1995).

10. For additional information on this ICLEI project see the Opening Address.

11. For more information on The Mega-Cities Project see Janice Perlman's presentation in Session 2.

12. The data in Ximena de la Barra's presentation were drawn from UNICEF, *The Progress of Nations* (New York: UNICEF, 1993); UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); UNDP, *Human Development Report 1993* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and UNDP *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

13. Mahbub ul-Haq, Introduction to session on "Are Cities Sustainable?" *The Human Face of the Urban Environment: Proceedings of the Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development*. ■

Appendix A

Program: Enabling Sustainable Community Development

An Associated Event
of the Second Annual Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development
held at The World Bank
Washington, D.C.
September 22–23, 1994

Welcome

Louis Pouliquen, Director, Transportation, Water
and Urban Development Department, World Bank

Opening Address

Jeb Brugmann, Executive Secretary, International Council for Local
Environmental Initiatives, Toronto, Canada

Session 1 Communities Speak

Chair: Alicia Bárcena, Executive Director, The Earth Council,
San Jose, Costa Rica

Presentations

Partnerships for Waste Minimization in Metro Manila

Elisea Gozun, National Program Coordinator, Metropolitan
Environmental Improvement Programme, Quezon City, Philippines

Negotiating Change: The Orangi Pilot Project in Karachi

Arif Hasan, Architect and Urban Planning Consultant, Karachi, Pakistan

Gender and Community Change: Bombay and Kanpur, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres

Sheela Patel, Director, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres,
Bombay, India

Building Political Coalitions: Nos Quedamos (We Stay)

Yolanda Garcia, Coordinator, Nos Quedamos (We Stay) Committee,
Bronx New York, U.S.A.

Discussant: Deepa Narayan, Social Scientist, Environment Department, World Bank

Floor Discussion

***Panel Discussion: Interface between Municipal Government
and Community Initiatives with Northern and Southern NGO Representatives***

Chair: Nafsiah Mboi, Member of Parliament, Jakarta, Indonesia

Community Empowerment Panel joined by:

Nancy Skinner, Director, Local Solutions to Global Pollution,
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

Eric Duell, Associate Director, International Programs/
Washington, D.C. Office, Habitat for Humanity International, U.S.A.

Session 2 Cross-Cutting Lessons

Chair: Caroline Moser, Senior Urban Social Policy Specialist, Transportation,
Water and Urban Development Department, World Bank

Introduction

Josef Konvitz, Coordinator, Organisation for Economic Co-operation
and Development, Ecological City Network, Paris, France

Presentations

Promising Solutions at the Intersection of Poverty and the Environment

Janice Perlman, Executive Director, The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.
New York, New York, U.S.A.

Community-Based Environmental Management in Asian Cities

Mike Douglass, Professor, Department of Urban and Regional
Planning, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A.

Community-Based Development Experiences across Cities

Mona Serageldin, Professor and Associate Director,
Unit for Housing and Urbanization, Graduate School of Design,
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Discussant: David Barkin, Professor of Economics, Universidad Autónoma
Metropolitana, Xochimilco Campus, Mexico City, Mexico,
and Senior Fellow, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy,
Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

Special Address

Ismail Serageldin, Vice President, Environmentally Sustainable
Development, World Bank

Session 3 Learning from International Support

Chair: K. C. Sivaramakrishnan, Senior Advisor, Urban Management,
Transportation, Water and Urban Development Department, World Bank

Introduction

Josef Leitmann, Senior Urban Planner, Transportation,
Water and Urban Development Department, World Bank

Presentations

Strengthening Community and Municipal Alliances

Jeb Brugmann, Executive Secretary, International Council
for Local Environmental Initiatives, Toronto, Canada

Lessons Learned in the Environmental Health Project

May Yacoob, Associate Director, Environmental Health Project,
Arlington, Virginia, U.S.A.

The Mega-Cities Project: Transferring Workable Approaches

Akhtar Badshah, Director of Programs, The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.,
New York, New York, U.S.A.

Discussants: Ximena de la Barra, Senior Urban Adviser, Urban Section,
UNICEF, New York, New York, U.S.A.

Kamla Chowdhry, Chair, Centre for Science and the Environment,
New Delhi, India

Reflections on the Forum

Michael A. Cohen, Senior Advisor, Environmentally Sustainable
Development, World Bank

Appendix B

Presenters

Akhtar Badshah

Director of Programs
The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.
915 Broadway, Suite 1601
New York, NY 10010 U.S.A.
Tel: 212-979-7350
Fax: 212-979-7624

Alicia Bárcena

Executive Director
The Earth Council
Apartado Postal 2323-1002
San Jose, Costa Rica
Tel: 506-223-3418
Fax: 506-255-2197

David Barkin

Professor of Economics
Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana
Apartado 23-181
16000 Xochimilco, DF
Mexico City, Mexico
Tel: 525-724-5100
Fax: 525-724-5235

Ximena de la Barra

Senior Urban Adviser, Urban Section
UNICEF
3 United Nations Plaza, DH-40E
New York, NY 10017 U.S.A.
Tel: 212-702-7246
Fax: 212-702-7148

Jeb Brugmann

Executive Secretary
International Council for Local
Environmental Initiatives
100 Queen Street West
City Hall, East Tower, 8th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2, Canada
Tel: 416-392-1462
Fax: 416-392-1478

Kamla Chowdhry

Chair
Centre for Science and the Environment
33/2A Prithvi Raj Road
New Delhi 110 011, India
Tel: 91-11-461-8847
Fax: 91-11-647-5879

Michael A. Cohen

Senior Advisor
Environmentally Sustainable
Development
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S7-027
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-1015
Fax: 202-473-3112

Mike Douglass

Professor
Department of Urban and Regional
Planning
University of Hawaii
Porteus Hall, 2424 Maile Way
Honolulu, HI 96822 U.S.A.
Tel: 808-956-6866
Fax: 808-956-6870

Eric Duell

Associate Director
International Programs/Washington D.C.
Office
Habitat for Humanity International
1511 K Street, N.W., Suite 605
Washington, D.C. 20005 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-628-9171
Fax: 202-628-9169

Yolanda Garcia

President
Nos Quedamos (We Stay) Committee
811 Courtlandt Avenue
Bronx, NY 10451 U.S.A.
Tel: 718-292-7686
Fax: 718-993-7777

Elisea Gozun

National Program Coordinator
Metropolitan Environmental
Improvement Programme
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources
2nd Floor, DENR Building
Visayas Avenue, Diliman
Quezon City, Philippines
Tel: 632-992-965
Fax: 632-992-965

Arif Hasan

Architect and Urban Planning
Consultant
37D Mohammad Ali Society
Karachi 75350, Pakistan
Tel: 92-21-432-361
Fax: 92-21-455-3964

Josef Konvitz

Coordinator
OECD
Ecological City Network
2, rue And -Pascal
75775 Paris Cedex 16, France
Tel: 33-1-4524-8200
Fax: 33-1-4524-7876

Josef Leitmann

Senior Urban Planner
Transportation, Water and
Urban Development Department
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S6-141
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-3461
Fax: 202-522-3232

Nafsiah Mboi

Member of Parliament
Jalan Gatot Subroto
Kompleks AD No. G1
Jakarta 12950, Indonesia
Tel: 62-21-525-0552
Fax: 62-21-522-8452

Caroline Moser

Senior Urban Social Policy Specialist
Transportation, Water and
Urban Development Department
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S6-121
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-3939
Fax: 202-522-3232

Deepa Narayan

Social Scientist
Environment Department
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S5-027
Washington, D.C., 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-1304
Fax: 202-522-3247

Sheela Patel

Director
SPARC
P.O. Box 9389
Bombay 400 026, India
Tel: 91-22-285-1500, 283-6743,
or 309-6730
Fax: 91-22-285-1500 or 495-0505

Janice Perlman

Executive Director
The Mega-Cities Project, Inc.
915 Broadway, Suite 1601
New York, NY 10010 U.S.A.
Tel: 212-979-7350
Fax: 212-979-7624

Louis Pouliquen

Special Advisor to the Director
Transportation, Water and
Urban Development Department
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S6-121
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-3786
Fax: 202-522-3227

Ismail Serageldin

Vice President
Environmentally Sustainable
Development
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S7-031
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-4502
Fax: 202-473-3112

Mona Serageldin

Professor and Associate Director
Unit for Housing and Urbanization
Graduate School of Design
Harvard University
48 Quincy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138 U.S.A.
Tel: 617-495-4964
Fax: 617-495-9347

K.C. Sivaramakrishnan

Senior Advisor, Urban Management
Transportation, Water and
Urban Development Department
World Bank
1818 H Street, N.W., Room S4-033
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-473-5426
Fax: 202-522-3232

Nancy Skinner

Director
Local Solutions to Global Pollution
1429 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94702 U.S.A.
Tel: 510-540-8843
Fax: 510-540-4787

May Yacoob

Technical Director,
Community Participation
Environmental Health Project
1611 North Kent Street, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22209 U.S.A.
Tel: 703-247-8730
Fax: 703-243-9004

Appendix C

Classification of Registered Participants

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Private consultants and firms	50	19
Aid organizations (public and private)	45	17
Academics (U.S. and European)	41	16
NGOs and CBOs (North American) ^a	26	10
World Bank staff	22	8
U.S. government officials (non-aid)	17	7
NGOs and CBOs (developing country)	15	6
Developing country government officials	14	5
Other (embassy officials, municipal officials, developing country academics, business)	31	12
Total	261	99 ^b

a. "NGO" means "nongovernmental organization"; "CBO" means "community-based organization."

b. Percent column does not total 100 due to rounding.

Special Edition

Special Edition

February 1996

the Family in America

A Publication of The Rockford Institute Center on The Family in America

HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND "FAMILOPHOBIA"

*Reflections on the
United Nations' 1996
"Habitat II" Conference*

*by
Allan Carlson, Ph.D.*

*The global shift from the
once-dominant world of
the farmer-peasant to the
world of the megacity raises
critical questions about
"the social, economic and
environmental viability of
human settlements."*



The United Nations' foray into social policy continues in 1996 as the Preparatory Conference for the United Nations' Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) convenes in New York this March, with the full assembly to meet in Istanbul the following June. The declared purpose of these sessions is to address two themes: "Adequate Shelter for All" and "Sustainable Human Settlements Development in an Urbanizing World."

Beneath the familiar jargon and stale, Scandinavian-styled policy orientation inherited from recent U.N. assemblies (notably the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women and Development) lies an authentic and fundamental problem: "By the turn of the century, humankind will be crossing a threshold where over 50% of the population will live in urban areas" (#6).^{*} On a global scale, the once-dominant world of the farmer-peasant is giving way to the megacity, and critical questions emerge about "the social, economic and environmental viability of human settlements" (#2).

While the authors of this document exhibit the normal U.N. abhorrence of family life (indeed, U.N. functionaries have all but perfected a new form of group mental illness, which might be dubbed "familophobia," or "fear of families") and while they dance around the fundamental habitat issues actually confronting the peoples of the world, their work is not without merit. The expected subterranean focus on "over-population" and fertility control is largely absent (an exception proving the rule is #77), as are attempts to smuggle in "freely available abortion," "ready access to contraceptives," and other bureaucratically favored "solutions." Solid, positive ideas can be found in the text. The challenge for delegates of

*The challenge for
delegates of goodwill in
New York and Istanbul
is to highlight the
positive proposals and
redirect the overall
document toward the
embrace of family
life and
household autonomy.*

goodwill in New York and Istanbul is to highlight the positive proposals and redirect the overall document toward the embrace of family life and household autonomy.

The Obvious Flaws

The surface flaws of the Habitat II draft are those endemic to U.N. social documents. Most obviously, jargon of a peculiar sort clutters the draft, as international bureaucrats talk to each other in their own, self-serving code. Familiar phrases include: "global solidarity and cooperation" (#1); "the maintenance of bio-diversity and cultural diversity" (#16); "partnerships between and among all actors from public, private and community organizations and individuals" (#20); "international networking" (#32); and "enablement" (#42). The mantra-like repetition of these phrases produces rhapsodic visions of future settlements, where human foibles and flaws are forever banished, a world:

...that will make efficient use of resources within the carrying capacity of eco-systems and by providing all people with equal opportunities for a healthy, safe and productive life in harmony with nature, cultural heritage and spiritual and cultural values, ensuring social progress (#26).

And we'll all live happily ever after.

At the same time, the drafters remain obsessed by old models of bureaucrat-to-bureaucrat foreign aid such as "the fulfilment [sic] of the accepted target of 0.7 percent of Gross National Product for official development assistance" (#33a). Equally familiar is abject submission to radical gender egalitarianism, on the Nordic model,¹ as in the call "to

THE FAMILY IN AMERICA (ISSN 0892-2691) is published monthly for \$24 per year by The Rockford Institute, 934 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Phone: (815) 964-5813. Second-class postage paid at Mount Morris, IL.

POSTMASTER: Send changes of address to THE FAMILY IN AMERICA, P.O. Box 416, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

^{*}Numerical Paragraphs cited from "The Habitat Agenda Draft Resulting From the Second Intersessional Meeting of the Informal Drafting Group of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)," 13 October 1995.

promote gender-sensitive planning and management of human settlements" (#90), or the imperative for "empowering women and men to participate equally in all activities related to human settlement" (#10).

Deeper Problems

Beneath these surface annoyances, however, lie two more troubling matters.

First, as noted above, this draft shares with the Cairo and Beijing conferences a fundamental rejection of the concepts "family" and "marriage." The latter term never appears, although marriage is the key step toward founding a new household (or "settlement") in the vast majority of cases. Only #18, conspicuously bracketed to symbolize dissent by some on the drafting committee, prominently bears the equally feared word "family":

The family as a basic unit of society is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. Its constructive role for all sustainable settlements should be recognized and enhanced by all States. All necessary conditions for its integration, preservation, improvement and protection within an adequate shelter, with access to basic services and with decent livelihood, should be facilitated.

Although the paragraph ends by paying deference to the correct, but easily misinterpreted, reality that "various forms of the family exist," these lines are admirably constructed.

Yet this paragraph is an alien presence in a document given over to a celebration of hyper-individualism and, implicitly, a post-family world. Rather than talking of families as the basic unit to be housed, the draft severs individuals from their natural social bonds, casting them instead as isolated atoms. An example: "Equitable human settlements are

those in which all people—women and men, children and youth—have equal access to basic housing..." (#14). In refusing to admit the famil-



ial nature of human existence and residence, the drafters of Habitat II are instead forced into defining persons as victims, members of "vulnerable groups," who only gain status through state dependence or state action. In identifying social collectives deserving of subsidy, family units are the only ones not cited (#60, #72). Just as the social democracies of Sweden and Denmark have aimed at an atomized social environment where each individual lives

placement of free, family-centered local and regional economies by the "globalized" economy, driven in turn by the multinational banks and corporations. In deference to the new international economic order, the document generally blesses "the liberalization of trade and the free flow of capital on a global scale" (#141). It urges "enabling nations" to find their place in "the global economy" (#146). And it calls on governments to use economic planning to draw rural regions into the new order (#78, #171). In such a world, family-owned and operated firms would find little place and a short future, as internationalized giants bearing state-granted privileges (but without local or national loyalties) extend their sway.

In part, this enthusiasm for globalized economic goals derives from a deterministic view of urbanization, which the draft sees as driving all before it. More important, the Habitat II document acknowledges that "the Bretton Woods institutions" such as the World Bank are part of "the UN family of agencies" (#157). The global economic order symbolized by the faceless money-elites at the World Bank serves as partner to the social-political ambitions of the international bureaucracy.

*U.N. functionaries have all but perfected a new form of
group mental illness, which might be dubbed
"familophobia," or "fear of families."*

alone, with a common dependence on the state for life and security, so this U.N. draft recasts government into the foundation of a new social order.

Second, the Habitat II draft gives surface aid and comfort to the dis-

In crafting a strengthened, realistic Habitat agenda—one that places the autonomous family at the center of consideration—it is not enough to retain #18 in unaltered or even strengthened form. Rather, recognition of the family must be injected

throughout the document, so that specific actions are recast in ways that improve the shelter opportunities and economic autonomy of families built on marriage and the presence of children.

An Alternate Model: Sweden

Fortunately, models exist of pro-family shelter policies that worked, for varying periods of time. An early, if brief, experiment occurred in the unlikely locale of Sweden. By the early 1930's, Swedes had identified inadequate family housing as a serious social problem, linked to a plunging fertility rate and a denial of family responsibilities. The herald was Alf Johansson. In a 1930 article, "Housing Need and Housing Production," he called for government action to alleviate the "crippling overcrowding" of larger families. Dismissing talk about Sweden's relatively high wages, Johansson asserted: "Our high wage standard grants workers the privilege to pay a larger rent for a small house.... That one room and a kitchen is utterly insufficient as the normal family dwelling does not need even to be discussed."¹ Under urban, industrial conditions, he continued, the "reasonable and conscientious" adaptation of married couples to economic realities such as poor housing led to the avoidance of children. Family-oriented housing must become the central social and economic priority. Childless adults could wait; children could not. As Johansson concluded: "Decent ample housing is certainly no guarantee for an adequate birth rate, but certainly at the present and more so in the future it represents a necessary prerequisite."²

Absorbing and expanding Johansson's argument, the social scientists Gunnar and Alva Myrdal emphasized in their early work the social pathologies afflicting families forced to live in overcrowded



dwelling. These included, they said, juvenile crime, alcoholism, prostitution, and "even homosexual actions." State housing subsidies, they insisted, "ought to be directed wholly toward families with children." Those who were childless had other options and less social claim. Large families faced an immediate crisis.⁴

Under the prodding of Johansson and Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish government established the Social Housing Investigation Commission in late 1933. Its subsequent reports focused almost completely on the needs of large families. Under industrial capitalist rela-

tions, the first report explained, families found their living standard negatively affected "primarily by number of children. Only by diminishing family size can the individual family maintain a higher standard of living for the parents and those children already born."⁵ Specific proposals to counter this pressure included rent subventions for families with three or more children, rising to 50 percent for families with five; the use of state financial regulations to construct "child-oriented," multi-family dwellings; and the redirection of state-backed mortgages for the purchase of homes exclusively toward couples raising children.⁶

*The global economic
order symbolized by the
faceless money-elites
at the World Bank
serves as partner to the
social-political
ambitions of the
international
bureaucracy.*

The American Experiment in "Adequate Shelter for All"

In the United States, meanwhile, another model of family-centered shelter policy took shape. The groundwork included creation of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in 1934 and development, over the next decade, of the long-term, amortized mortgage, featuring a low down payment; the chartering of the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae") in 1938, which indirectly mobilized invest-

ment dollars toward home construction: the crafting of special federal tax benefits for owner-occupied housing, including deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes; and creation of VA home loans through the Servicemen's Adjustment Act of 1944.

Declarations of policy intent clearly marked the central place of family. In contrast to the United Nations' contemporary familophobia, the 1948 National Conference on Family Life heard President Harry Truman declare that "children and dogs are as necessary to the welfare of this country as is Wall Street and the railroads." The prominent Housing Act of 1949 stated: "The general welfare and security of the nation and the health and living standards of the people require...the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family."

While some federal housing funds went into "slum clearance" and the construction of multi-family "public housing," with dubious results, most energy and resources flowed toward the building of single-family dwellings. VA and FHA mortgage insurance programs "made home ownership available to many families who could never have considered it otherwise."⁷ While rarely codified in law, a strong bias in favor of young

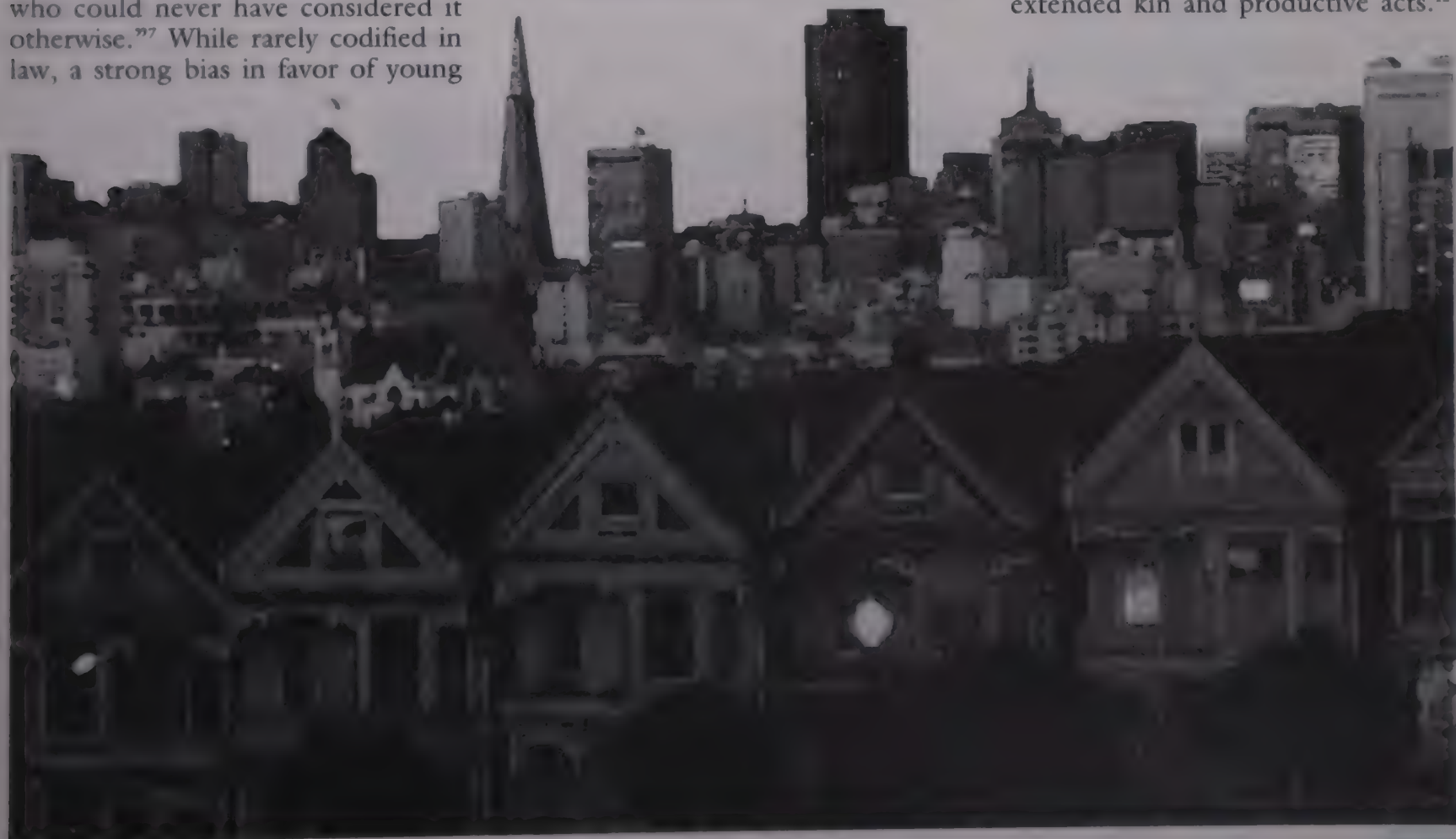
married couples governed loan distribution and underwriting rules. About 99 percent of federally guaranteed mortgages in the 1945-60 period went to new, married-couple families. During this time, the number of owner-occupied homes climbed by 90 percent; the U.S. marital birthrate rose nearly 50 percent; and the divorce rate steadily declined. The architects of housing policy could point with pride to the burgeoning number of homes on new streets, "which [are] the playgrounds for the numerous small children of the young families which make up the suburban population."⁸

The Perils of Intervention

Yet while limited early success could be measured in both programs, state intervention posed perils to Swedish and American families. In the Swedish experiment, the policy preference for multi-family dwellings invited negative social engineering. While Gunnar Myrdal's defense of large families was genuine, wife Alva was able to take the same policy formula and—with only slight adjustments—promote non-family behavior. She urged that families live in "collective houses," where virtually

every family function—from food preparation and recreation to infant child care—would be collectivized.⁹ She successfully urged that regulations allow cohabitating couples to qualify for subsidies, cutting legal marriage out of the equation. Indeed, once the Swedish state had cast marriage as superfluous, "pro-family" measures actually tended to weaken families, transforming them from autonomous social units into mere dependents and quasi-administrative units of the state.¹⁰

While the American version of pro-family social engineering showed measurable positive consequences for a longer period of time, one can also see negative effects from the outset. For example, leading American architects and home builders from this era shared, with Alva Myrdal, a strong interest in the sociological theories of William Ogburn. He had argued that "there is a considerable and increasing disorganization of the [modern] family" and a surrender of natural family productive functions to governments, corporations, and other outside entities.¹¹ These theorists favored instead a "companionate" family model, which elevated the functions of psychological bonding and industrialized consumption, and severed the nuclear family from extended kin and productive acts.¹²



Architect John Dean urged abandonment of housing designs "inherited from the family farm,"¹³ while theorist Svend Reimer argued for the application of "functional architecture" to the modern "companion-ship" family. Formal rooms such as parlors and work rooms devoted to home production (such as food preservation and preparation) should give way to "flexible rooms that... reduce household chores to a minimum."¹⁴ These ideas bore policy consequences. As the official "Fannie Mae" history of housing reasoned, "the family [in the 1950's] was no longer the basic economic as well as the social unit" so "there was no longer so great a need for attics, sheds, storage cellars, work rooms, sewing rooms, etc." FHA guidelines denied government-insured mortgages to any residence including space for a productive shop, office, separate living unit for extended family member or renter, or preschool.¹⁵ FHA underwriting rules also discouraged regional and rural forms of design, preferring instead the "split level" and "basic ranch" models that rested on "companionate family" principles.¹⁶

In the two decades after 1970, American housing policy actually shifted into an open anti-family stance. With most families-with-children in residences by the late 1960's, housing demand slackened. Seeking ways to keep the influential housing construction industry afloat, advocates realized that family breakup (through divorce) and the creation of non-family households (such as the oxymoronic "single person households") would, for a time, stimulate demand. In consequence, the FHA and VA liberalized their guidelines to extend mortgages to "unconventional" living arrangements. This had the effect of actually encouraging non-marriage (particularly divorce), by making it easier to create two households out of one. These changes also reduced the natural economic gains provided adults by marriage, and in some cases

Land reforms transformed

the majority of rural

Mexicans from semi-feudal

peons into landholders on

subsistence farms. As these

families became once again

free units of both

production and

consumption, the natural

family economy thrived.

even created a disincentive to traditional family life.¹⁷

In both Sweden and the United States, settlement policies that had supported and even encouraged family living became destructive of the family due to ideological rewrites of regulatory language. This common result suggests that while government housing policy can be successfully crafted to aid families, such measures must be built with care and monitored and constantly protected from deviation.

The Mexican Miracle

A third model of successful, family-centered habitat policy comes from Mexico, where a remarkable economic experiment occurred between 1940 and the late 1960's. Land reforms implemented in these years broke up the vast, under-utilized estates and distributed 30 million acres of productive land to peasant families. This transformed the majority of rural Mexicans from semi-feudal peons into landholders on subsistence farms. As these families became once again free units of both production and consumption, the natural family economy thrived. Mexican agriculture recorded spectacular gains in output and productivity. This redistribution of land from state-favored elites to the

common people also strengthened extended families. These served as the social core from which individuals went out in search of temporary employment in urban centers or in the United States (through the *bracero* program); thus economic mobility was better achieved through larger families.¹⁸

Even in the cities, economic growth occurred in the context of positive family integration. As two economists have explained: "foremost was the continuing importance of the family as a unit of production and consumption. The family served as a base from which to pool the fortunes of several... earners seeking



temporary, low-wage jobs."¹⁹ In addition, the largest share of the new urban economic activity occurred within family-owned and operated firms. Hiring and promotion practices at large enterprises also gave preference to family ties.

Predictably, this reconstruction of the Mexican economy on distributist,²⁰ family-oriented principles generated an increase in fertility and average family size. But economic output climbed even faster, growing by an average of 7.4 percent annually in the 1945-55 period, and by an average 4.3 percent from 1955 to 1965, figures exceeding U.S. growth rates.

Alas, this successful system, resting on the return of productive land resources to families, succumbed to political subversion, starting in the late 1960's. A corrupt government sharply cut back land distribution to family farmers and restructured land sales, subsidies, and regulations in favor of large, industrialized farms. The World Bank successfully pressured the Mexicans to alter other laws and incentives in favor of multinational corporations. As a result, "small, family-based enterprises lost ground to the extending reach of modern businesses."²¹ Meanwhile, United Nations and U.S. State Department officials, sensitive to the "population bomb" thesis, pressured the Mexican government to reduce the fertility of rural families through sterilization, increased contraceptive use, and measures that would "encourage fragmentation of the extended family."²² By the late 1980's, the Mexican economy was under the control of the multinational elites, and Mexican families were again in the servile state.

Unexpected Virtues

A true, positive Habitat plan would place distributist policies regarding land, shelter, and economic activity at its core. It would distribute the ownership and use of productive land and shelter as widely as possible, and it would encourage an economy resting largely on family-controlled enterprises, focused on local and regional markets. Although subservient on its surface to "the new international eco-

nomic order" defined by the World Bank and U.N. population experts, the existing Habitat II draft actually contains a surprising number of posi-

A true, positive Habitat

plan would place

distributist policies

regarding land, shelter,

and economic activity at

its core. It would

distribute the ownership

and use of productive land

and shelter as widely as

possible, and it would

encourage an economy

resting largely on family-

controlled enterprises,

focused on local and

regional markets.

tive ideas, often buried deep in jargon-filled paragraphs. Where the surface "hyper-individualism" and "multinationalism" clearly derive from the modernist premises of

Western nations, these positive sections appear to come from the influence of peoples with a greater reverence for tradition. They lack only a unifying focus on family bonds to give them authentic power and promising meaning. These paragraphs of note include:

#56, which urges governments to distribute publicly held land to the people for "human settlements development" and calls for "transparent, comprehensive, easily accessible, and progressive taxation and incentive mechanisms to stimulate efficient, environmentally sound and equitable use of land;"

#122, which recommends solid measures to stimulate rural economies, including "equitable and efficient pricing and payment systems for rural products, especially of food items, consumed in urban areas" and elimination of "environmentally harmful [state] subsidies, e.g. those stimulating the excessive use of pesticides, and price control systems which perpetuate unsustainable practices...;"

#80, which encourages "appropriate and environmentally sustainable investment in industry and...service activities" in rural settlements;

#99, which calls on governments to hold multinational corporations financially and legally liable "for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control";

#89, which supports "labour-intensive investments" in housing construction, a preference for "small business" contracting and procurement, and encouragement of "micro," "small-scale private," and "co-operative sector" [read, in almost every case, "family"] enterprises;

#114(c), which encourages the integration of "credit finance, vocational training, and technological transfer programmes in support of the small, micro-enter-

prise and cooperative [again, usually read 'family centered'] sector";

#106-#108, which urge the defense against multinational development of "historical places and objects of cultural and scientific, symbolic, spiritual and religious value," emphasizing their importance "for the spiritual growth of society";

and #69 and #114(d), which encourage recognition and use of "the informal [read, again, 'family'] sector for the construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of housing and local services" and

"fair treatment of the informal sector" in securing financing.

When pulled together, these scattered planks form a nearly complete distributist platform for family-centered shelter and economic life, with only the unifying word, "family," lacking. Additional paragraphs that would round out this agenda include:

—granting priority to the *rehabilitation* of existing settlements, not only socially distinct urban neighborhoods, but also small towns, villages, and rural communities facing pressures of economic centralization;

—and urging, wherever possible, the integration of agriculture into human settlement, so that more food

might be produced, marketed, and consumed close to home.

In short, when compared to predecessor drafts for the Cairo and Beijing conferences, the Habitat II document contains the elements of a workable, morally sound agenda. With judicious amendment, focused on the familial nature of settlements, it could actually work to the benefit of families and peoples around the globe.

—Allan Carlson, Ph.D., is the President of the Rockford Institute and the author of several books on family policy and economics including *From Cottage to Work Station: The Family's Search for Social Harmony in the Industrial Age* (Ignatius).

Endnotes

¹ See: Allan Carlson, "Women's Conference or Valkyries Ride Again?: The Nordic Factor," *The Family in America*, August 1995.

² Alf Johansson, "Bostadsbehov och bostadsproduktion," *Tiden* 22 (Feb. 1930): 74.

³ Johansson, "Bostadsbehov och bostadsproduktion," p. 77.

⁴ Alva and Gunnar Myrdal, *Kris I Befolkningsfragan* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers forlag, 1934), pp. 232-53.

⁵ SOU 1935:2. Socialdepartementet, *Betänkande Med Forslag Rorande Lan Och Bidrag Av Statsmedel Till Framjande Av Bostadsforsorjning For Mindre Bemedlade Barnrika Familjer I Engahem M.M.* (Stockholm 1935): 51.

⁶ SOU 1937:43. Socialdepartementet, *Betänkande Med Forslag Rorande Lan Och Bidrag Av Statsmedel Till Framjande Av Bostadsforsorjning For Mindre Bemedlade Barnrika Familjer I Engahem M.M.* (Stockholm, 1937): 75-116.

⁷ Gertrude Sipperly Fish, ed., *The Story of Housing*, sponsored by the Federal National Mortgage Association (New York: MacMillan,

1979): 474.

⁸ Fish, *Story of Housing*, p. 475.

⁹ Alva Myrdal, "Kollektiv bostadsform," *Tiden* 24 (December 1932): 602.

¹⁰ See: Allan Carlson, *The Swedish Experiment in Family Politics: The Myrdals and the Interwar Population Crisis* (New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Books, 1990), pp. 195-97.

¹¹ William Ogburn and Ernest Rutherford Groves, *American Marriage and Family Relationships* (New York: Henry Holt, 1928).

¹² See also: E.W. Burgess and H.J. Locke, *The Family* (New York: American Book Company, 1945), pp. 651, 654-72.

¹³ John P. Dean, "Housing Design and Family Values," *Land Economics* 29 (May 1953): 128-41.

¹⁴ Svend Reimer, "Architecture for Family Living," *Journal of Social Issues* 7 (1951): 140-51.

¹⁵ Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), p. 247.

¹⁶ See: Allan Carlson, *From Cottage to Work Station: The Family's Search for Social Harmony in the Industrial Age* (San Francisco:

Ignatius, 1993), p. 76.

¹⁷ See: Carlson, *From Cottage to Work Station*, pp. 78-83. A more technical discussion of this change is found in: George Sternlieb and James W. Hughes, *America's Housing: Prospects and Problems* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1980), pp. 58-66.

¹⁸ Francisco Alba and Joseph E. Potter, "Population and Development in Mexico Since 1940: An Interpretation," *Population and Development Review* 12 (March 1986), pp. 49-51, 56.

¹⁹ Alba and Potter, "Population and Development in Mexico," p. 57.

²⁰ For a concise summary of distributist principles, see: Hillaire Belloc, *The Servile State* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1977 [1913]).

²¹ Alba and Potter, "Population and Development in Mexico," pp. 62-64.

²² Jeffrey B. Nugent and R. Thomas Fillepspey, "Old Age Pensions and Fertility in Rural Areas of Less Developed Countries: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 31 (July 1983): 809-29.

the
Family
in
America

Editor: Christopher J. Check; Associate Editor: Bill Kauffman; Editorial Consultant: Bryce J. Christensen; Publisher: Allan C. Carlson; Publication Director: Guy C. Reffett; Art Director: Amanda E. Lundgren. THE FAMILY IN AMERICA is a publication of The Rockford Institute Center on the Family in America. The views expressed in THE FAMILY IN AMERICA are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute, or its directors. Nothing in THE FAMILY IN AMERICA should be construed as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress.

Board of Advisors for The Center on the Family in America

Philip Abbott, Wayne State University; William Donohue, Catholic League; Jack Douglas, University of California-San Diego (Retired); Jacqueline Kasun, Humboldt State University; Maurice MacDonald, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Wade C. Mackey, Southeastern Community College; Robert Nisbet, Columbia University (Retired); Joseph Peden, City University of New York; J. Craig Peery, Brigham Young University; Richard Vedder, Ohio University. SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT: P.O. Box 416, Mount Morris, IL 61054. Phone: 1-800-877-5603. Copyright©1996 by The Rockford Institute. All rights reserved.

**THE WORLD BANK**

A partner in strengthening economies
and expanding markets
to improve the quality of life
for people everywhere,
especially the poorest

Headquarters

1818 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.
Telephone: (202) 477-1234
Facsimile: (202) 477-6391
Telex: MCI 64145 WORLDBANK
MCI 248423 WORLDBANK
Cable Address: INTBAFRAD
WASHINGTONDC

European Office

66, avenue d'Iéna
75116 Paris, France
Telephone: (1) 40.69.30.00
Facsimile: (1) 40.69.30.66
Telex: 640651

Tokyo Office

Kokusai Building
1-1, Marunouchi 3-chome
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan
Telephone: (3) 3214-5001
Facsimile: (3) 3214-3657
Telex: 26838



9 780821 333174

ISBN 0-8213-33